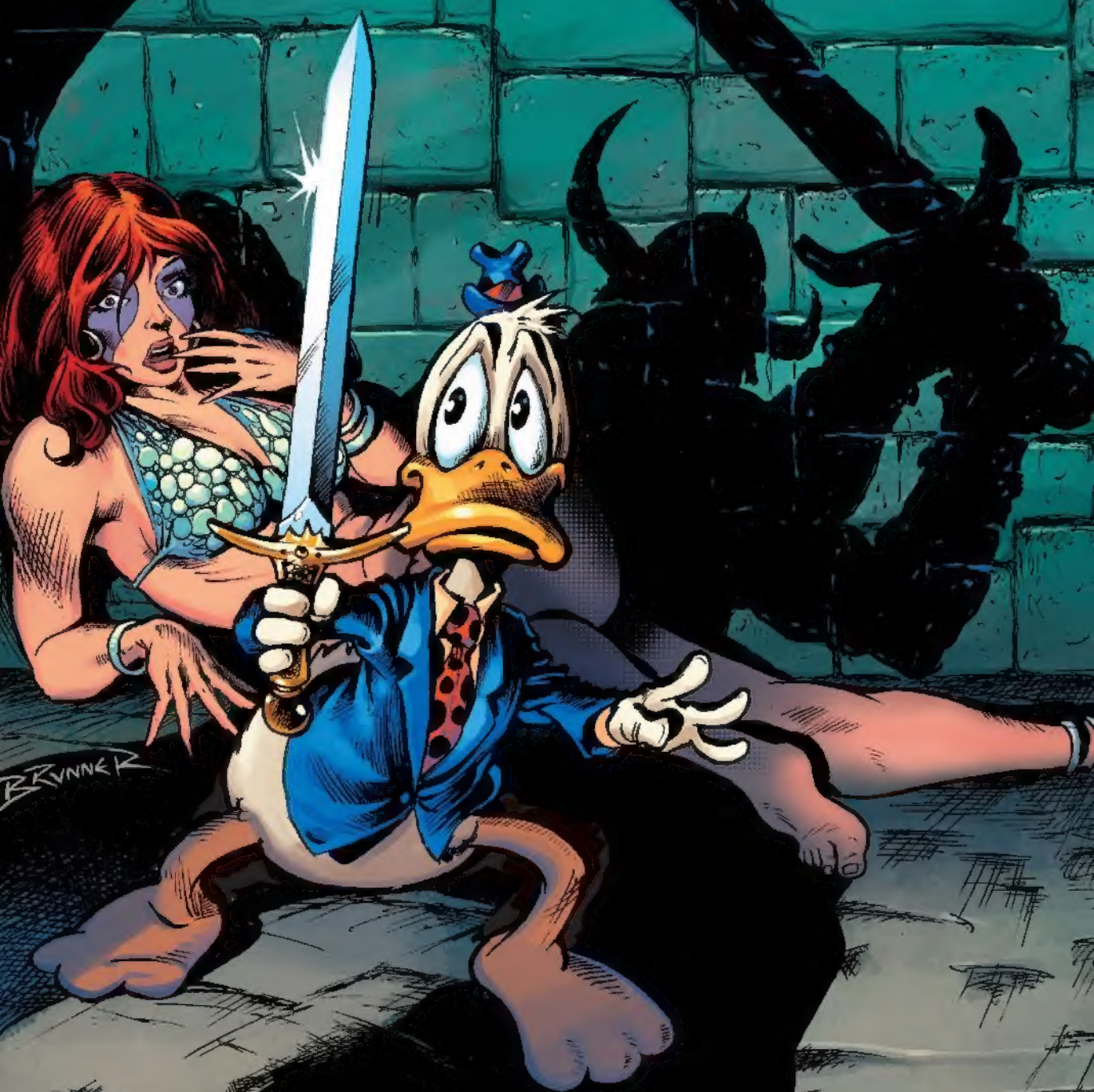


MARVEL

HOWARD THE DUCK



GERBER • MAYERIK • BRUNNER • J. BUSCEMA • COLAN • S. BUSCEMA

THE FULL STORY OF HOW MARVEL'S MOST NOTORIOUS MOVIE STAR BECAME TRAPPED IN A WORLD HE NEVER MADE!

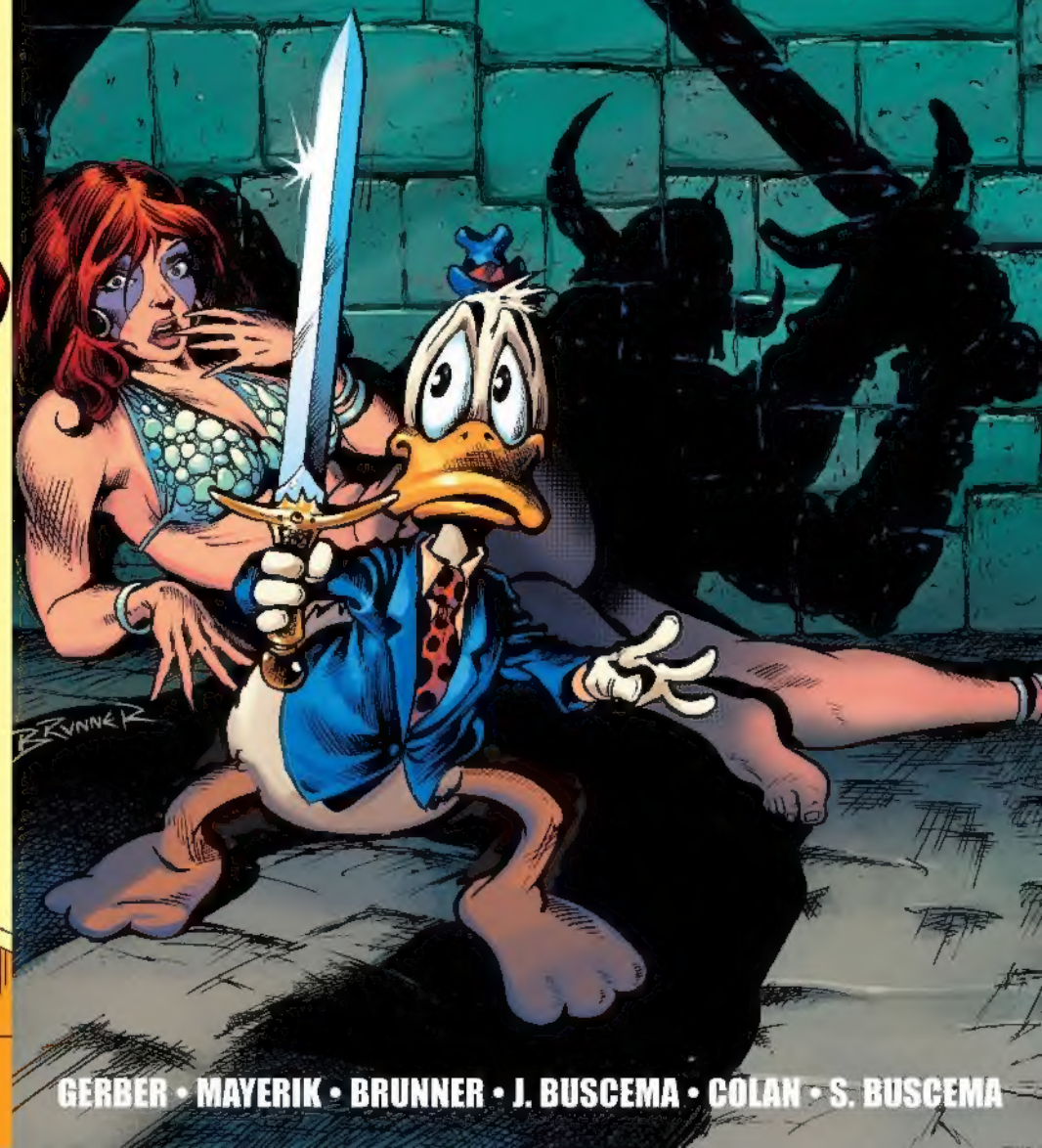
Howard the Duck takes an adventure into fear when he's plucked from Duckworld and finds himself on Earth, bill to proboscis with the melancholy muck-monster Man-Thing! Stuck here on a planet of hairless apes, the furious fowl forges a future for himself in, of all places, Cleveland. But the would-be Master of Quack Fu will have his wings full hanging out with Spider-Man — and waging "waaaugh" with madcap menaces like the Space Turnip, the Cookie Creature, the Beaver and Doctor Bong. Will that earn him a spot on the Defenders? Better yet, Howard for president!

Collecting *Fear* #19, *Man-Thing* (1974) #1, *Howard the Duck* (1976) #1-16 and Annual #1, *Marvel Treasury Edition* #12, and material from *Giant-Size Man-Thing* #4-5 — written by Steve Gerber; and illustrated by Val Mayerik, Frank Brunner, John Buscema, Gene Colan, Sal Buscema and more.



MARVEL

HOWARD THE DUCK



GERBER • MAYERIK • BRUNNER • J. BUSCEMA • COLAN • S. BUSCEMA

FEAR

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19

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ADVENTURE INTO FEAR TM

THE

WITH

MAN-THING



Stan Lee
PRESENTS:

MAN-THING!™

A VOYAGE BEYOND
THE BEYOND BY...

STEVE GERBER, VAL MAYERIK, SAL TRAPANI, ART SIMEK, letterer, ROY THOMAS
Writer Artist Inker STANG., Colorist Editor

The ENCHANTER'S APPRENTICE!

REALITY: SINCE THE
DAWN OF TIME,
MAN HAS SOUGHT
TO UNRAVEL ITS
FABRIC--EXAMINE
THE WEAVE--DISCOVER
ITS ESSENCE.

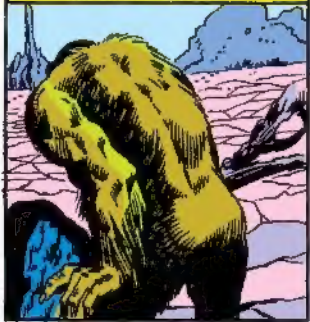
REALITY: PLATO FOUND IT IN
THE SHADOWY CONFINES
OF A CAVE-- DESCARTES, IN
A SYLLOGISM... "COGITO ERGO SUM"
..."I THINK, THEREFORE I AM."

REALITY: IT IS HERE--ON
THIS BLOOD-RED PLAIN--
'NEATH THIS VERDANT SKY--
AMONG THESE STONES
SURELY SCULPTED BY A
SOMNAMBULANT LUNATIC.

THEY
BLEW IT--
BOTH OF
THEM.

REALITY: AYE, IT
IS HERE--AND
THE MACABRE
MAN-THING
IS ABOUT TO
MEET IT--
HEAD-ON!

FROM THE WEST THERE COMES A LOW ROAR--THE SOUND OF MEN AND MACHINES--MOVING--TRAMPLING THE EARTH BENEATH THEM--RAISING A MAMMOTH CRIMSON CLOUD.



THE CAUSE? THIS BATTALION OF COMBAT-TOUGHENED AMERICAN G.I.'S, BLAZING A TRAIL OF GUTS AND GLORY--AND DUST--ACROSS THIS WEIRD LANDSCAPE!



THE MAN-THING WHIRLS! ON THE EASTERN HORIZON, AN EQUALLY OMINOUS CLOUD APPEARS--ALSO ACCOMPANIED BY THE DIN OF MEN AND METAL.



BUT IT IS A DECIDEDLY DIFFERENT SOUND--THE CLANGOR OF SWORDS, NOT THE CRACK OF RIFLES--THE THUNDER OF MOOF-BEATS, NOT THE GNASHING OF TANK TREADS...



FOR NO MODERN ARMY IS THIS...
...BUT A HORDE OF SAVAGE BARBARIANS!

AND THE MYSTERY CONTINUES TO DEEPEN! SUDDENLY, THE SKY IS FULL WITH THE BUZZING OF ANGRY "BEES"...

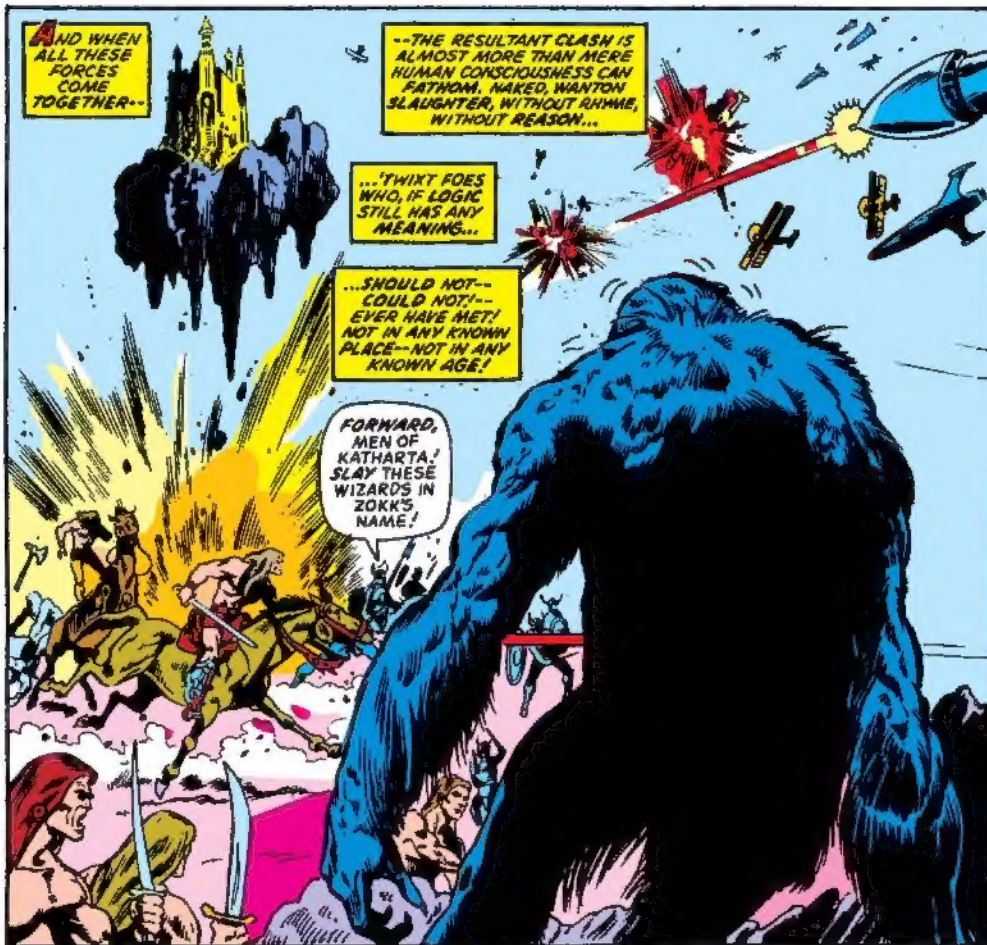


THE MOTTLED MONSTER GLANCES UPWARD AND SEES...

BIPLANES--GONE FROM OUR SKIES FOR DECADES...AND ROCKET SHIPS--SO AERODYNAMICALLY UNSOUND--



--EVEN HUGO GERNSBACK WOULD NOT BELIEVE THEY COULD FLY!



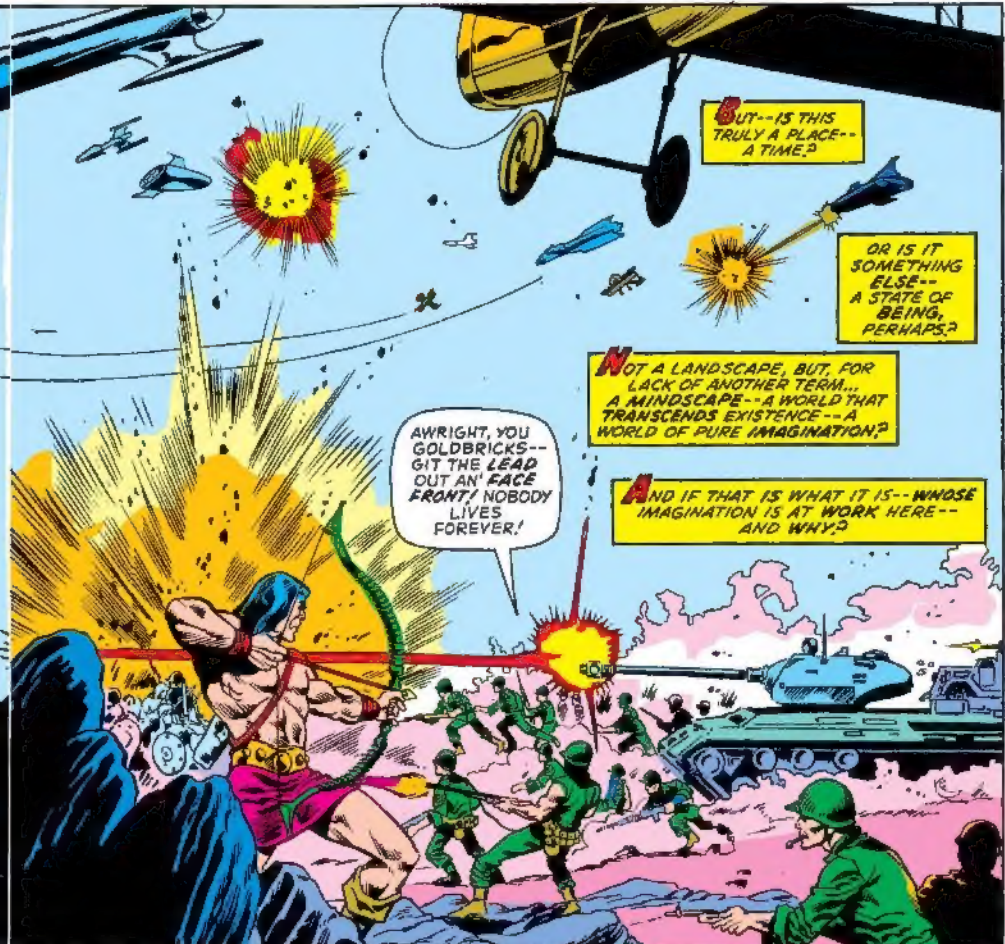
AND WHEN ALL THESE FORCES COME TOGETHER--

--THE RESULTANT CLASH IS ALMOST MORE THAN MERE HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS CAN PATHOS. NAKED, WANTON SLAUGHTER, WITHOUT RHIME, WITHOUT REASON...

...TWIXT FOES WHO, IF LOGIC STILL HAS ANY MEANING...

...SHOULD NOT--COULD NOT!--EVER HAVE MET! NOT IN ANY KNOWN PLACE--NOT IN ANY KNOWN AGE!

FORWARD, MEN OF KATHARTA! SLAY THESE WIZARDS IN ZOKK'S NAME!



BUT--IS THIS TRULY A PLACE--A TIME?

OR IS IT SOMETHING ELSE--A STATE OF BEING, PERHAPS?

NOT A LANDSCAPE, BUT, FOR LACK OF ANOTHER TERM...A MINDSCAPE--A WORLD THAT TRANSCENDS EXISTENCE--A WORLD OF PURE IMAGINATION?

AND IF THAT IS WHAT IT IS--WHOSE IMAGINATION IS AT WORK HERE--AND WHY?

AWRIGHT, YOU GOLDBRICKS--GIT THE LEAD OUT AN' FACE FRONT! NOBODY LIVES FOREVER!



AND NOW... THE TRUTH:

IT IS BOTH-- IMAGINATION AND REALITY.

HERE, THEY ARE ONE AND THE SAME...

...JUST AS THEY ARE ON EARTH, THOUGH FEW REALIZE IT.

SARGE--LOOK! A LIGHT-BRIDGE FROM THE CASTLE!



THAT IS WHY THIS GIRL, JENNIFER KALE, CAN WALK ON A BEAM OF LIGHT--

--DOWN HUNDREDS OF FEET FROM THE CASTLE IN THE SKY--

...TO THE SPOT WHERE STANDS THE THING FROM THE SWAMP.



YOU SEE, SHE IS REAL... BUT SHE IS NOT TRULY HERE.

I--I KNOW YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND THIS--OR MY WORDS-- BUT TRY TO FEEL WHAT I'M SAYING.

YOU MUST COME... HURRY TO SAFETY... AND TRY TO REMEMBER I'M YOUR FRIEND.

HERE... TAKE MY HAND AND WE'LL GO...!



ZOKK! IT'S THE WITCH-GIRL-- AND SHE'S STOLEN THE SPOILS OF THIS BLOODY COMBAT!

AFTER HER-- UP THE LIGHT-BRIDGE! FOLLOW ME--

--LEST ANY VICTORY WON THIS DAY GO FOR NAUGHT!

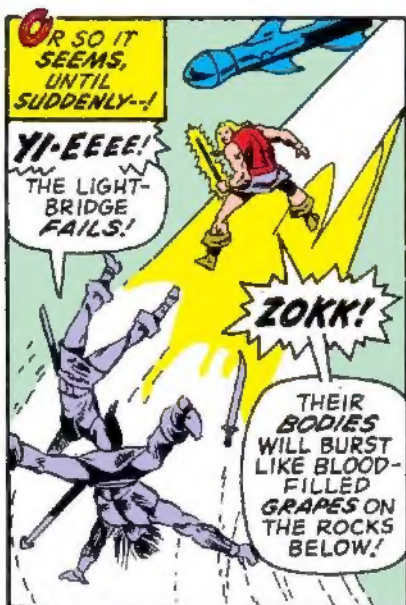
AYE, KORREK-- LEAD ON!

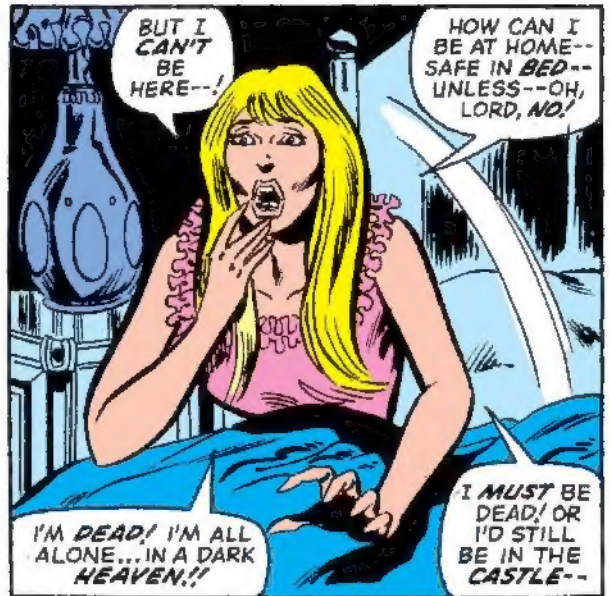


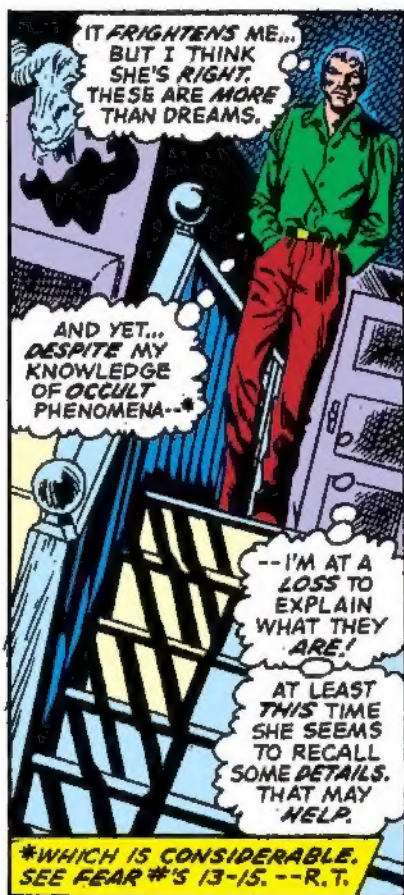
DON'T BE AFRAID-- THEY CAN'T CATCH US! JUST HURRY!

LOOK, KORREK-- THE SWAMP DEMON CANNOT RUN! HE'S TOO SLOW--TOO AWKWARD!

AYE--WE'LL NET THE UNGODLY BEAST FOR SURE!







IT FRIGHTENS ME... BUT I THINK SHE'S RIGHT. THESE ARE MORE THAN DREAMS.

AND YET... DESPITE MY KNOWLEDGE OF OCCULT PHENOMENA--

--I'M AT A LOSS TO EXPLAIN WHAT THEY ARE!

AT LEAST THIS TIME SHE SEEMS TO RECALL SOME DETAILS. THAT MAY HELP.

*WHICH IS CONSIDERABLE. SEE FEAR #5 13-15. --R.T.



BUT WHATEVER THE ANSWER--I'VE GOT TO FIND IT SOON--BEFORE SHE'S DRIVEN INSANE.

THIS HAS PLAGUED HER FOR MONTHS NOW...EVER SINCE--EH?

ANDY? WHAT ARE YOU--?



PEANUT BUTTER! AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT, YOUNG MAN? YOU'LL NEVER GET BACK TO SLEEP.



IF I DON'T, IT'LL BE SCREAMING--NOT PEANUT BUTTER--THAT KEEPS ME AWAKE!

IS JEN GOING GA-GA, OR WHAT?

IF ONLY IT WERE THAT SIMPLE, ANDY!

UNFORTUNATELY... I DON'T BELIEVE IT IS. I'M WORRIED, SON.



JUST THINK BACK A MOMENT.

IT BEGAN WHEN THE PSYCHIC BOND BETWEEN JEN AND THE MAN-THING WAS BROKEN.*

I'M AFRAID THERE MAY BE SOME CONNECTION...BUT WE CAN'T BE CERTAIN.

*FEAR #15. --ROY.



HOWEVER, I AM CERTAIN THAT IT'S LATE--AND WE'RE TIRED. SO...TO BED.

YEAH... OKAY. I'LL GO QUIETLY.

THUS, THEY LEAVE THE KITCHEN UNAWARE... THAT THIS KNIFE IS--GLOWING!



MORE...IT IS CHANGING! GROWING LARGER WITH EACH PULSATION OF ITS EERIE NEW AURA--



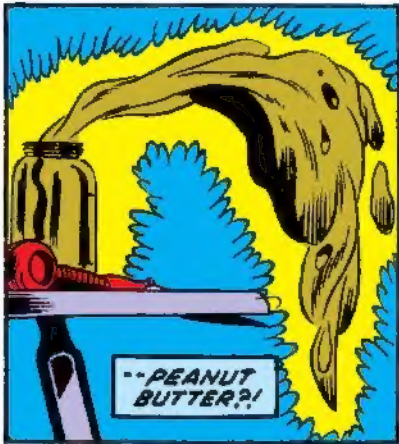
--UNTIL ITS VERY SHAPE IS ALTERED--

--UNTIL IT IS THE INNOCENT BUTTER-KNIFE NO MORE!



AND WHEN IT CEASES BECOMING--

A KATHARTAN WAR SWORD RESTS BESIDE THE JAR OF--



--PEANUT BUTTER?!



OR--



--IS IT A JAR OF... MAN??



HOWEVER YOU CHOOSE TO EXPLAIN IT--THE JAR'S CONTENTS HAVE BECOME--

KORREK--
WARRIOR PRINCE OF KATHARTA!

A SOMEWHAT PUZZLED PRINCE JUST NOW...BUT NO LESS SAVAGE, NO LESS THE IRON-THWEED WESTLANDS GIANT FOR THAT--!

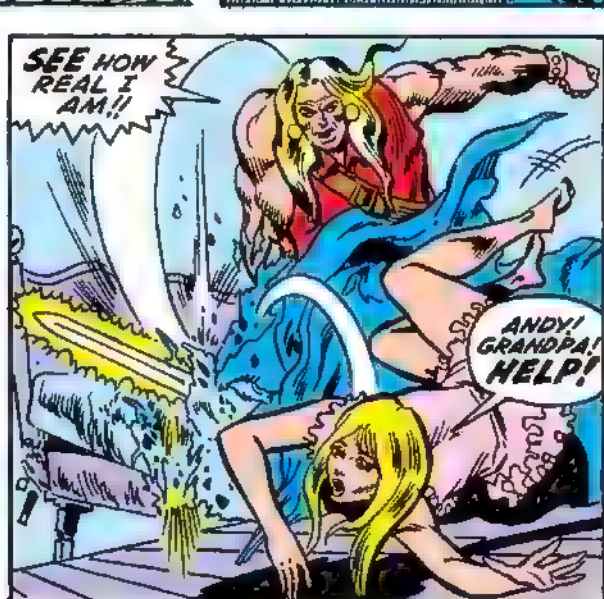
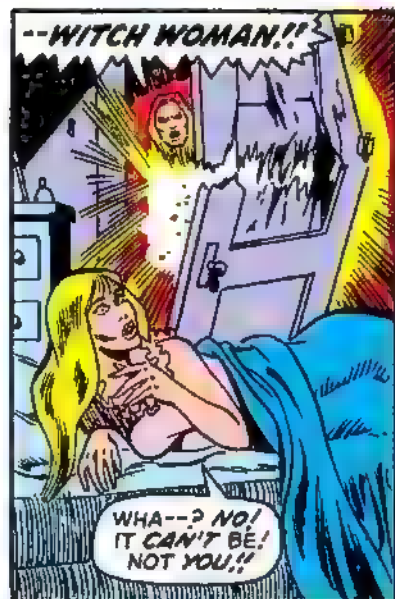
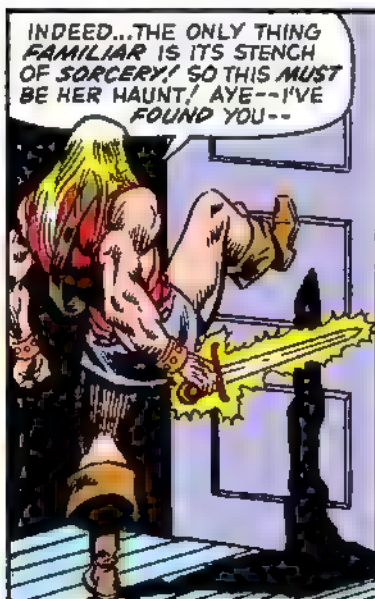
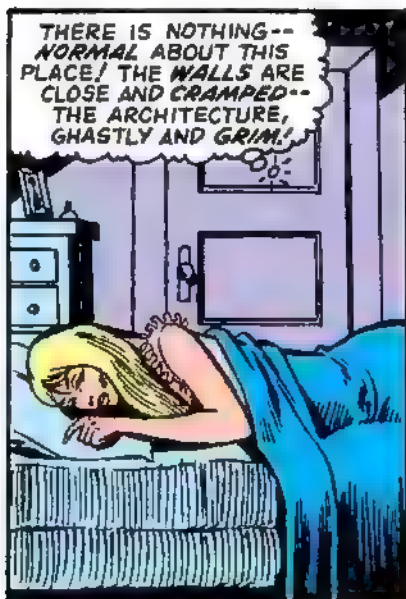


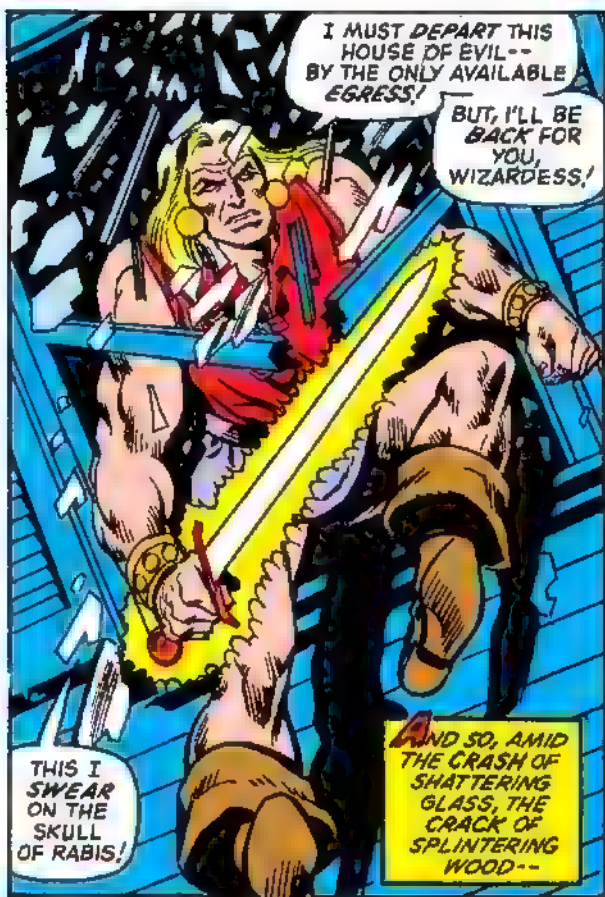
AND NO LESS HUNGRY FOR REVENGE, EITHER--!

I KNOW YOU ARE HERE, FOUL SORCERESS--THOUGH I KNOW NOT NOW I KNOW...

...NOR HOW I CAME TO BE HERE...

...NOR WHERE IT IS I HAVE COME TO BE...!





I MUST DEPART THIS HOUSE OF EVIL-- BY THE ONLY AVAILABLE EGRESS!

BUT, I'LL BE BACK FOR YOU, WIZARDESS!

THIS I SWEAR ON THE SKULL OF RABIS!

AND SO, AMID THE CRASH OF SHATTERING GLASS, THE CRACK OF SPLINTERING WOOD--



--KORREK HIES AWAY!

OKAY, FOLKS --IN TWENTY-FIVE WORDS OR LESS... WHAT IS THIS?



LIKE...WHO WAS THAT GUY? WHY'D HE TRY TO KILL MY SISTER? WHERE'D HE COME FROM?

I WISH I COULD ANSWER YOU, ANDY-- BUT I CAN'T! I JUST DON'T KNOW!



WELL, I KNOW!

GOOD HEAVENS! WHO IN THE NAME OF--

YOU--!

SUDDENLY ALL THIS IS STARTING TO MAKE A PERVERSE KIND OF SENSE!

YOU MEAN TO SAY-- YOU KNOW THIS PERSON?

I'LL SAY I DO-- ONLY TOO WELL!



OF COURSE, SHE DOES! 'TWAS I WHO LED HER-- AND THE HIAN-OBJECT-- ACROSS THE DIMENSIONS TO THE DARK DOMAIN OF SOMINUS--

--TO RESCUE YOU, JOSHUA KALE, AND THE CULTISTS OF ZHERED-NA,* AH, YES--'TWAS I AND NONE OTHER--

--DAKIMH THE ENCHANTER!

*FEAR #15. --ROY.



HE'S THE MAGICIAN I TOLD YOU ABOUT, GRANDPA--THE ONE I CAN ALWAYS COUNT ON...

...TO DESERT ME WHEN I NEED HIM MOST!

IS ALL THIS CHAOS YOUR DOING?



SURELY YOU JEST, CHILD! THE TRUTH IS QUITE THE OPPOSITE! I'VE COME TO HELP YOU.

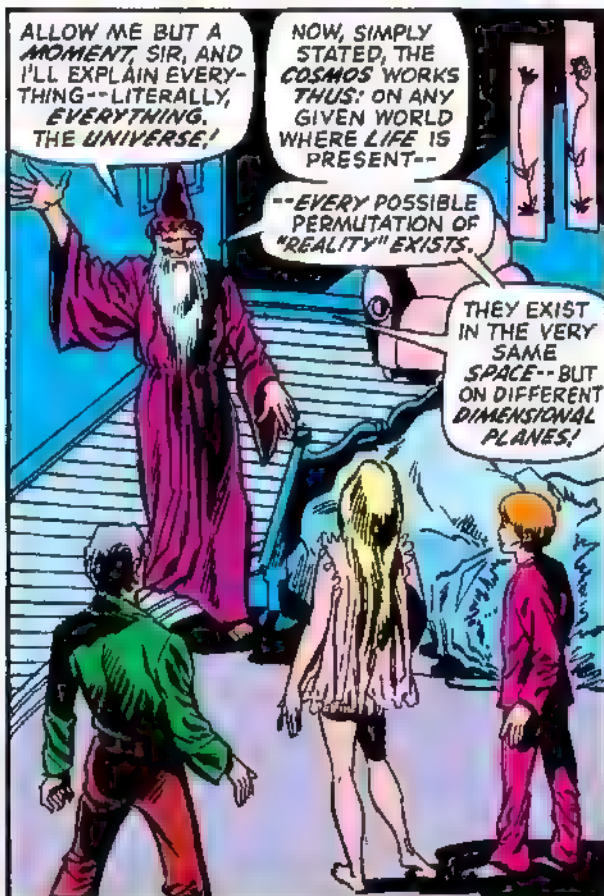
TOGETHER, WE CAN STOP IT--

--BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE.



WILL YOU KINDLY QUIT TALKING IN RIDDLES, MAN? STOP WHAT? BEFORE WHAT? TOO LATE?

WE "SIMPLE FOLK" STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND ANY OF THIS!



ALLOW ME BUT A MOMENT, SIR, AND I'LL EXPLAIN EVERYTHING--LITERALLY, EVERYTHING, THE UNIVERSE!

NOW, SIMPLY STATED, THE COSMOS WORKS THUS: ON ANY GIVEN WORLD WHERE LIFE IS PRESENT--

--EVERY POSSIBLE PERMUTATION OF "REALITY" EXISTS.

THEY EXIST IN THE VERY SAME SPACE-- BUT ON DIFFERENT DIMENSIONAL PLANES!



INDEED, WHAT IS REALITY ON ANY ONE SUCH PLANE-- IS MERE FANTASY ON ALL THE OTHERS. ALL IS REAL, ALL IS ILLUSION.

AND, UNTIL RECENTLY, ALL THIS ALL WAS HELD IN A DELICATE COSMIC BALANCE--

--TO PREVENT ALTERNATE REALITIES FROM CONVERGING-- AND POSSIBLY DESTROYING ONE ANOTHER.

AND NOW THAT BALANCE HAS BEEN DISTURBED--

--AT THE NEXUS POINT OF THE COSMIC FORCES --IN THE SWAMP WHERE THE MAN-OBJECT DWELLS!

"THE RECENT FLURRY OF ACTIVITY THERE--THE CONSTRUCTION CREW DRAINING THE SWAMP TO ERECT AN AIRPORT ON THE SITE*--COULD WELL RESULT IN CATASTROPHE!"

"FOR IF THE BALANCE I SPOKE OF IS NOT SET ARIGHT, THE VERY STRUCTURE OF REALITY WILL COLLAPSE-- A MILLION MILLION ALTERNATE UNIVERSES WILL COLLIDE--!"

IN THE END, A PLAGUE OF INSANITY WOULD SWEEP ACROSS THE COSMOS --AND NONE WOULD SURVIVE."

"YOUR WORLD WILL BE INUNDATED BY A TIDE OF BLADE-WIELDING BARBARIANS... OR BEASTS WHO WALK AND TALK LIKE MEN...!"

"...OR BY DEMONS SPAWNED IN THE DARKEST PITS OF SOMINUS; OR BY ALL OF THESE-- AND MORE!"

*SEE FEAR #16-18. --R.

IT'S-- HORRIFYING! BUT WHY HAVE YOU COME TO ME? THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO!

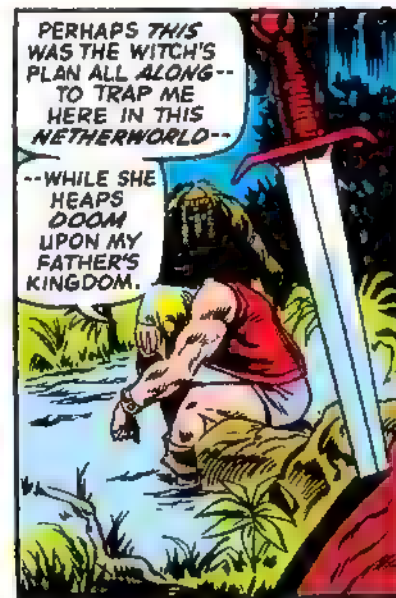
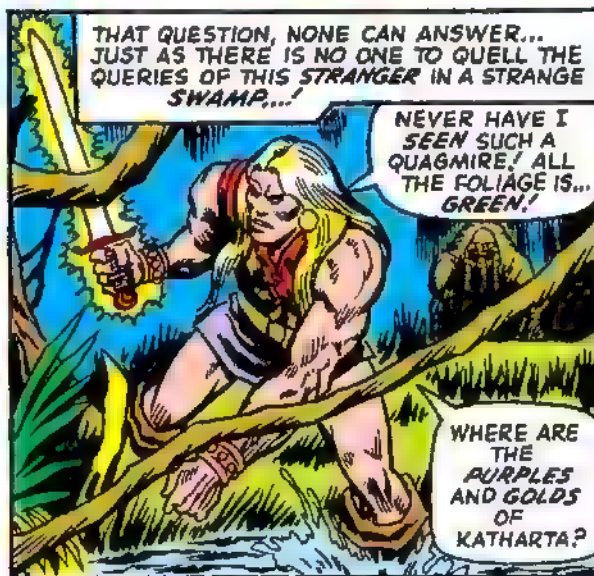
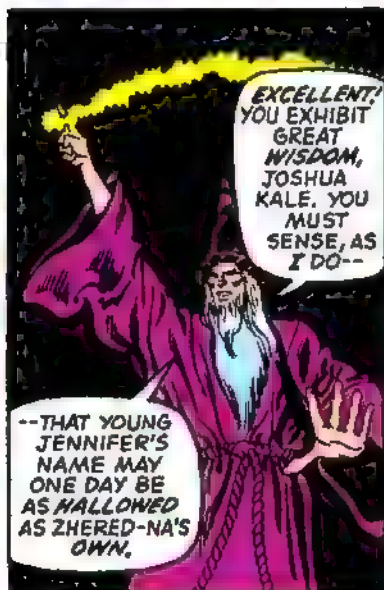
NO MATTER WHAT KORREX THINKS, I'M NO SORCERESS--!

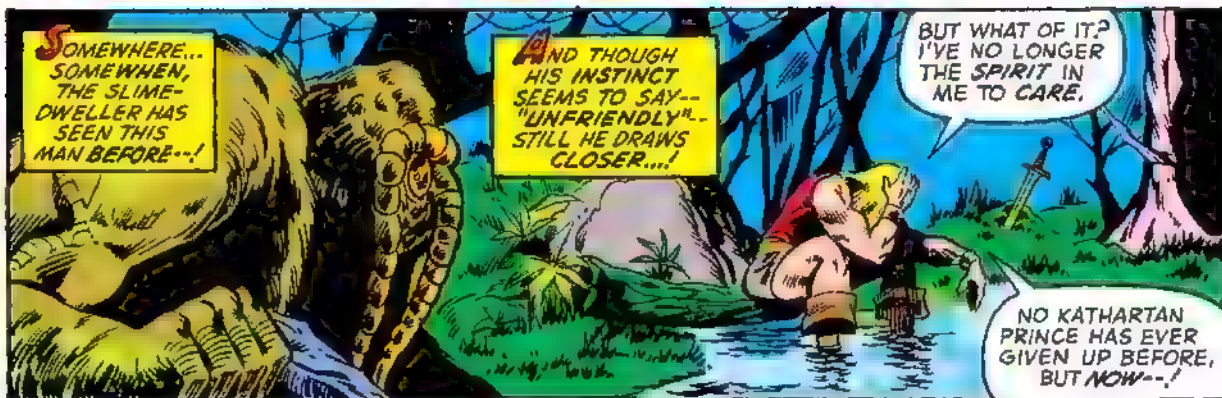
NOT YET, IT'S TRUE. BUT YOU'VE SHOWN GREAT POTENTIAL!

SO GREAT, IN FACT--THAT I PROPOSE TO MAKE YOU MY APPRENTICE--

--IMPART TO YOU ALL THE KNOWLEDGE I'VE AMASSED IN 20,000 YEARS OF LIFE!

YOU HAVE THE TALENT--AND THE COURAGE. HAVE YOU THE DESIRE TO EMBARK ON ON SUCH A VENTURE?



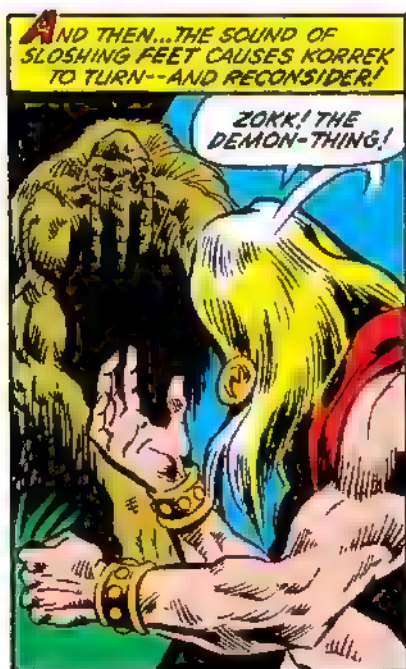


SOMEWHERE...
SOMEWHEN,
THE SLIME-
DWELLER HAS
SEEN THIS
MAN BEFORE--!

AND THOUGH
HIS INSTINCT
SEEMS TO SAY--
"UNFRIENDLY"--
STILL HE DRAWS
CLOSER...!

BUT WHAT OF IT?
I'VE NO LONGER
THE SPIRIT IN
ME TO CARE,

NO KATHARTAN
PRINCE HAS EVER
GIVEN UP BEFORE,
BUT NOW--!



AND THEN...THE SOUND OF
SLOSHING FEET CAUSES KORREK
TO TURN--AND RECONSIDER!

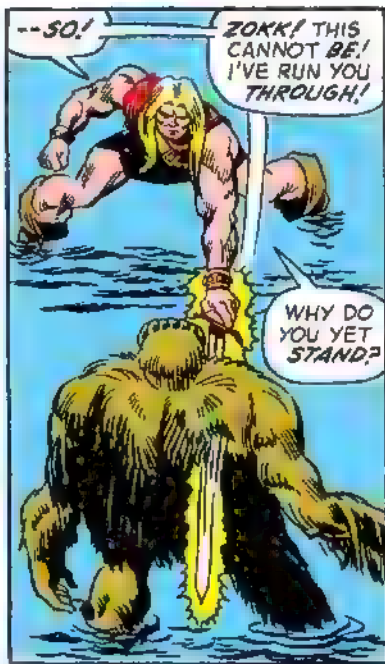
ZOKK! THE
DEMON-THING!



ONCE MORE, I AM
FLOODED WITH
HOPE--FOR IF
THE SORCERESS
SENT YOU TO
DISPATCH ME--
THEN, PERHAPS...

...HER SPELLS
ARE NOT SO
POTENT AS
I ASSUMED!
PERHAPS
I CAN
ESCAPE!

BUT FIRST,
MALODOROUS
ONE, YOU
DIE--



--SO!

ZOKK! THIS
CANNOT BE!
I'VE RUN YOU
THROUGH!

WHY DO
YOU YET
STAND?



CAN YOU NOT ANSWER,
BEAST? YOUR SILENCE
DRIVES ME TO FURY
AND FRENZY! BUT
NOT FEAR!

NO KATHARTAN
KNOWS FEAR!

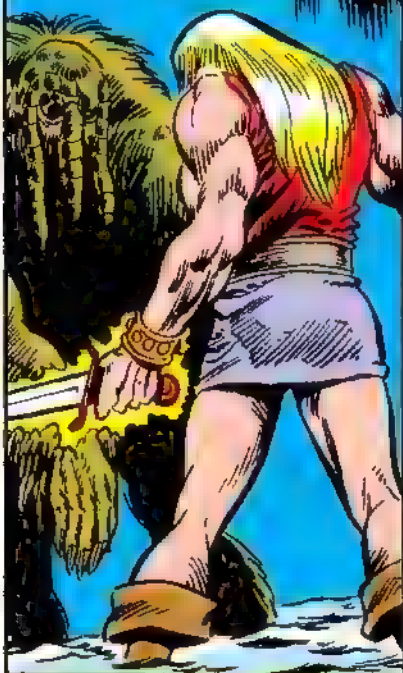
WE ARE,
AFTER ALL,
NOT A
BRIGHT
RACE--BUT
WE ARE
STRONG!



STRONG
ENOUGH TO
SLICE YOU--
HACK YOU--
CLEAVE YOU--
STAB YOU--

WHY
DON'T
YOU
FALL
DOWN??

A GAIN AND AGAIN THE CRACK-
LING BLADE OOOZES HARMLESSLY
THROUGH THE MIRY MAN-THING...



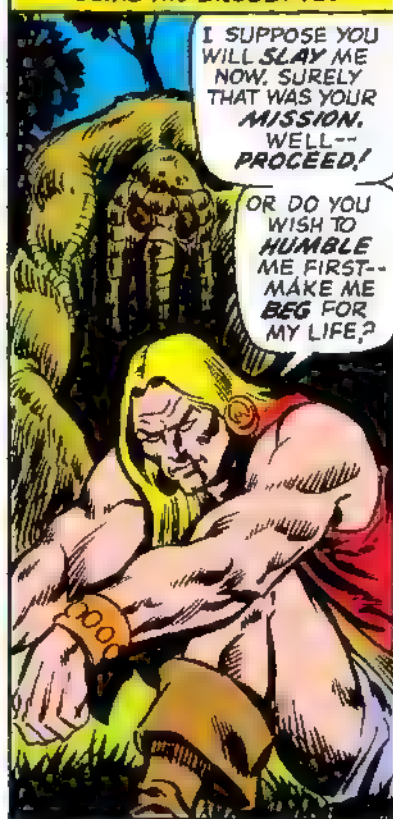
...UNTIL, FINALLY, KORREK'S
RAGE GIVES WAY TO DESPAIR.
AND, SULLEN AND WEARY--

--HE CASTS
HIS
WEAPON
AWAY...



WHAT ARE
YOU MADE
OF,
MONSTER?
CAN
NOTHING
HARM
YOU?

...AND FINDS A CLUMP OF DRY
GROUND WHERE HE MAY RE-
SUME HIS BROODING.



I SUPPOSE YOU
WILL SLAY ME
NOW, SURELY
THAT WAS YOUR
MISSION.
WELL--
PROCEED!

OR DO YOU
WISH TO
HUMBLE
ME FIRST--
MAKE ME
BEG FOR
MY LIFE?

WELL, I'LL NOT
GIVE YOU THAT
SATISFACTION!
AT THIS POINT,
I WELCOME
DEATH!

WHAT
ELSE IS
THERE--FOR
ONE WHOSE
LIFE HAS
BECOME AN
ABSURDITY?



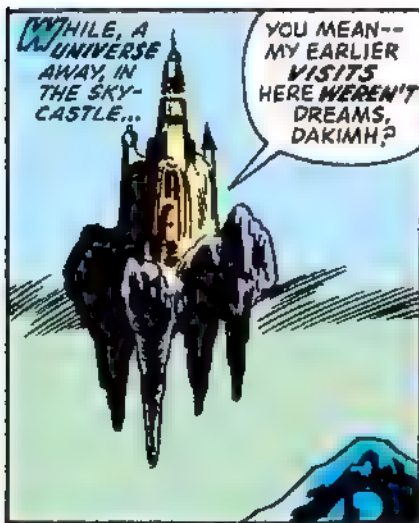
AW, CLAM UP,
BUD! YOU DON'T
EVEN KNOW THE
MEANING OF THE
WORD!

FINDING
YOURSELF
IN A WORLD
OF TALKING
HAIRLESS
APES--
NOW THAT'S
ABSURDITY!



OH--NO! WHAT
NEW HORROR IS
THIS? IT VAGUELY
RESEMBLES A
DUCK, BUT--!





WHILE, A
UNIVERSE
AWAY, IN
THE SKY-
CASTLE...

YOU MEAN--
MY EARLIER
VISITS
HERE WEREN'T
DREAMS,
DAKIMH?



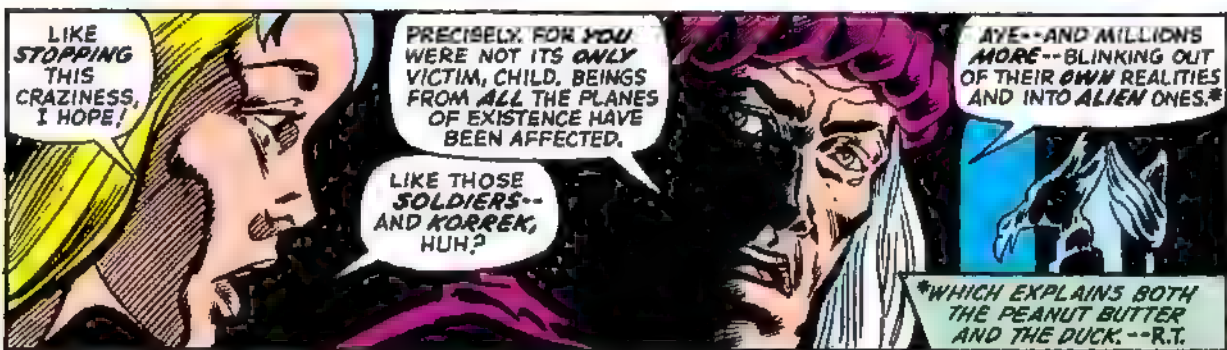
I WAS ACTUALLY "BLINKING"
BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN
THIS WORLD AND EARTH
DURING MY SLEEP--

--BECAUSE OF THIS
PSYCHIC--OR EMPATHIC--
OR WHATEVER--POWER
I'VE GOT?

FAR OUT... I WAS
SANE ALL ALONG. FOR
ONCE, IT REALLY WAS
THE REST OF THE
WORLD THAT WENT
BONKERS! I WAS SO
AFRAID THAT--

PUT THOSE
FEARS TO REST,
JENNIFER.
ALL I'VE TOLD
YOU IS TRUE.

AND WE
MUST
TURN TO
OTHER
MATTERS.



LIKE
STOPPING
THIS
CRAZINESS,
I HOPE!

PRECISELY. FOR YOU
WERE NOT ITS ONLY
VICTIM, CHILD. BEINGS
FROM ALL THE PLANES
OF EXISTENCE HAVE
BEEN AFFECTED.

LIKE THOSE
SOLDIERS--
AND KORREK,
HUH?

AYE--AND MILLIONS
MORE--BLINKING OUT
OF THEIR OWN REALITIES
AND INTO ALIEN ONES.*

*WHICH EXPLAINS BOTH
THE PEANUT BUTTER
AND THE DUCK.--R.T.



AND WE FACE
ANOTHER--
POTENTIALLY
GREATER--
THREAT, ALSO:

A CONGRESS OF
TYRANTS WHO HOPE
TO GAIN DOMINION
OVER ALL REALITY--
UNLESS WE HALT
THEM.

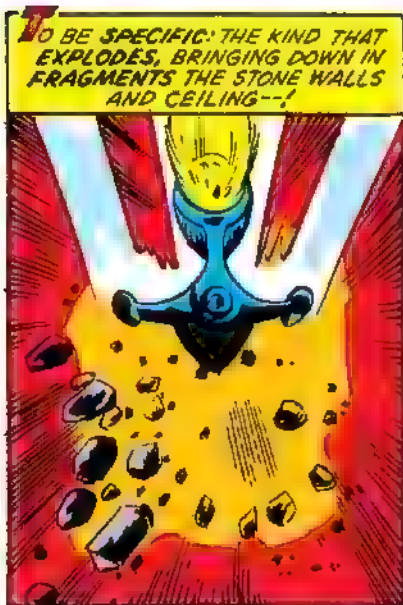
WHAT
IS IT
YOU'RE
LOOKING
UP?

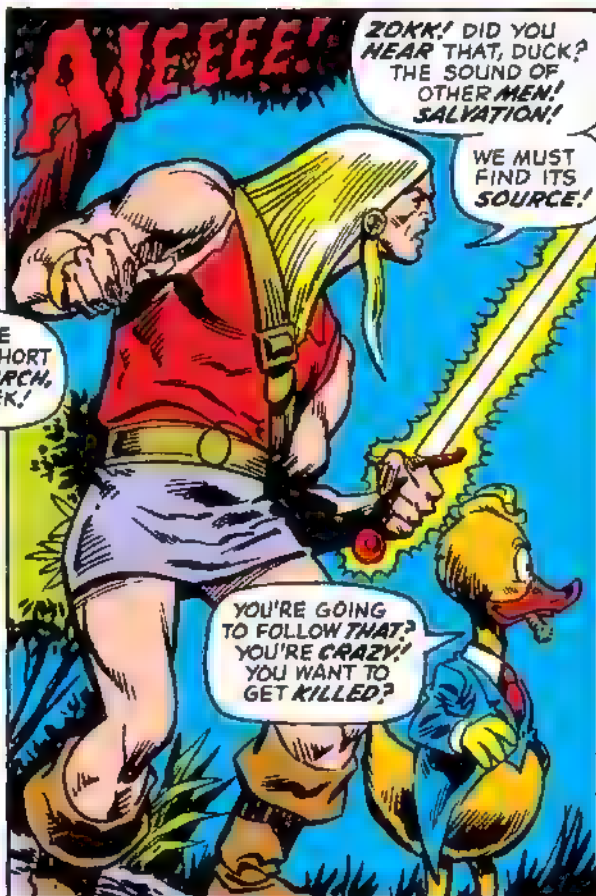
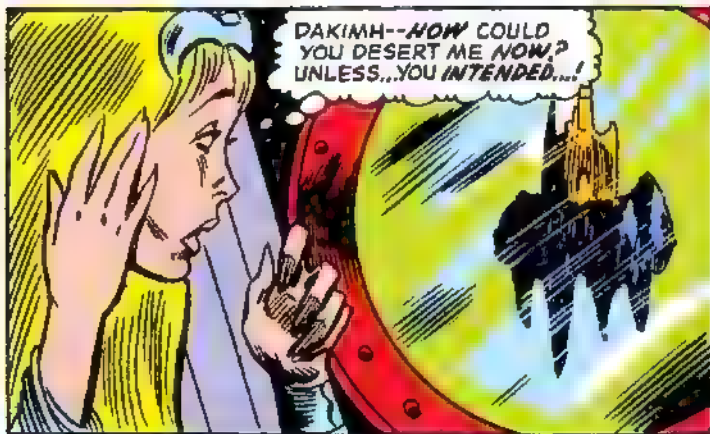
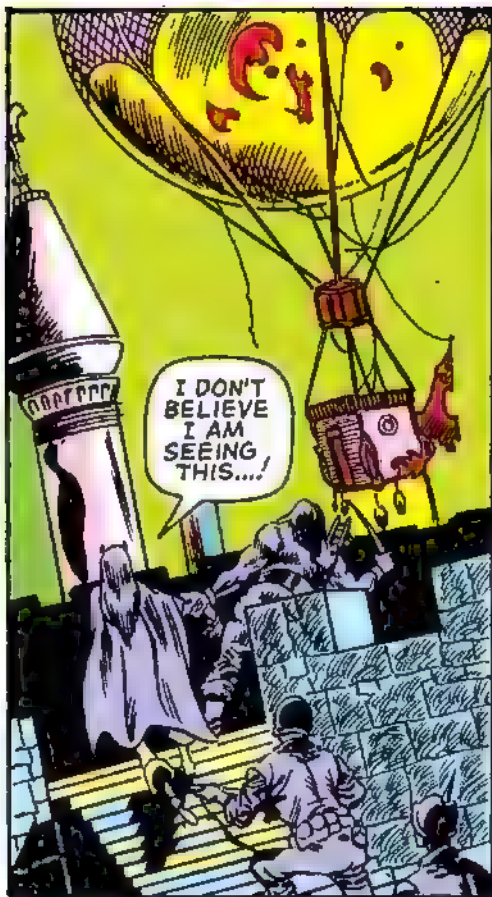


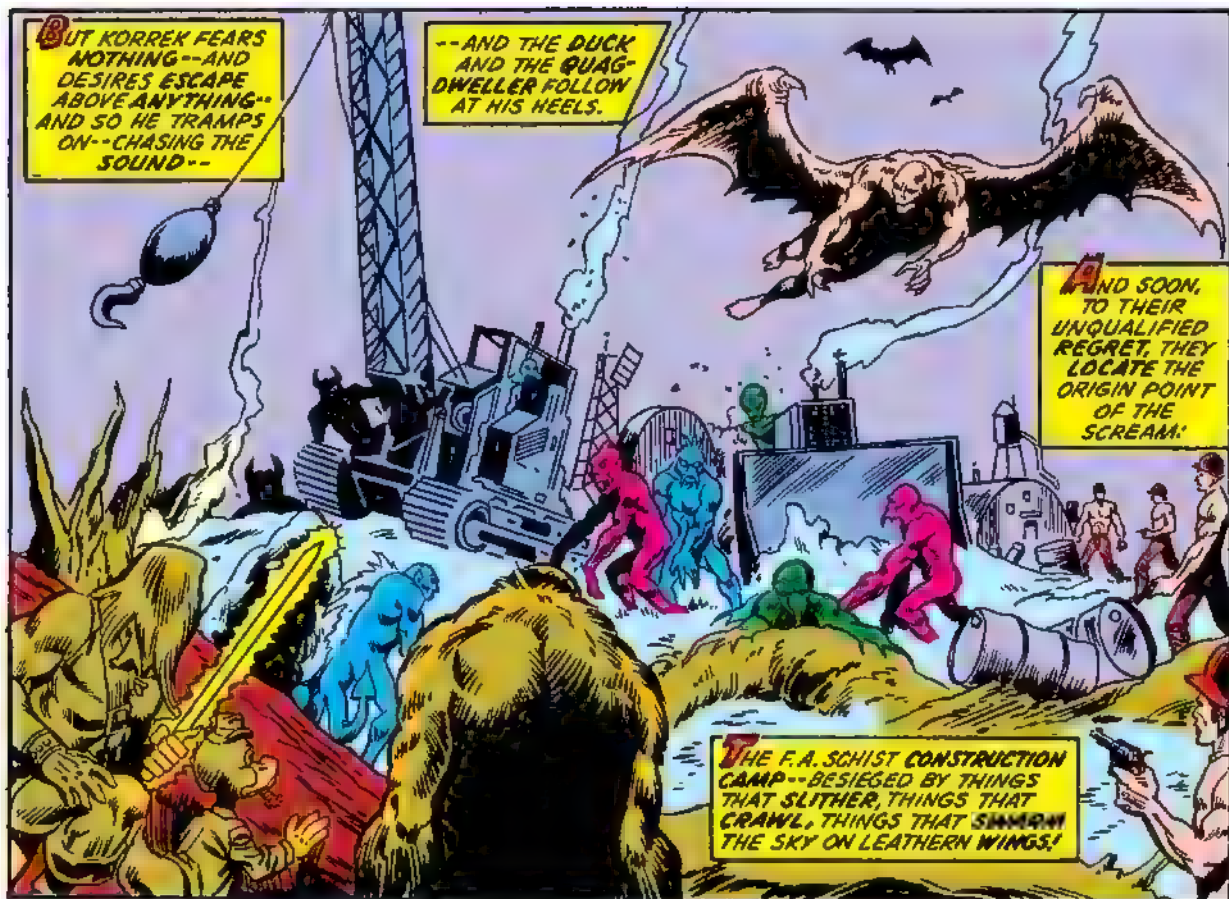
IS THAT A BOOK
OF SPELLS,
OR JUST AN
ENCYCLOPE--

DAKIMH!
LOOK OUT!!

THAT'S SOME
KIND OF
BOMB!!







NEXT: THE SANITY-RENDING CONCLUSION FEATURING... **THE BATTLE FOR THE PALACE OF THE GODS!** ALMOST EVERYTHING IN THE UNIVERSE, AND...

MAN THING

MARVEL COMICS GROUP™

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BY THE
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EC

1
JAN

02912

THE MOST STARTLING SWAMP-CREATURE OF ALL!

THE MAN-THING



NOW IN
HIS OWN
MAGAZINE!
FEAR-FRAUGHT
FIRST
ISSUE!

BRUNNER

Stan Lee
PRESENTS:

MAN-THING!

STEVE GERBER
WRITER

VAL MAYERIK
ARTIST

SAL TRAPANI
INKER

JOHN COSTANTIA, letterer
DAVE HUNT, colorist

ROY THOMAS
EDITOR

THE SCENE IS THE F.A. SCHIST CONSTRUCTION CAMP ON THE EDGE OF THE SWAMP... AND THE SITUATION, SIMPLY STATED, IS THIS: REALITY HAS RUN AMOK! THE CREATURES WHO HAVE SEIZED CONTROL OF THE CRANES AND 'DOZERS ARE DEMONS, IN THE SERVICE OF THE MYSTERIOUS OVERMASTER, WHO SEEKS TO RULE THE UNIVERSE. AND THOSE WHO STAND AGAINST HIM ARE A BARBARIAN PRINCE, A DISTURBINGLY "HUMAN" DUCK... AND THE MACABRE MAN-THING! AND THIS IS BUT A PRELUDE TO THE...

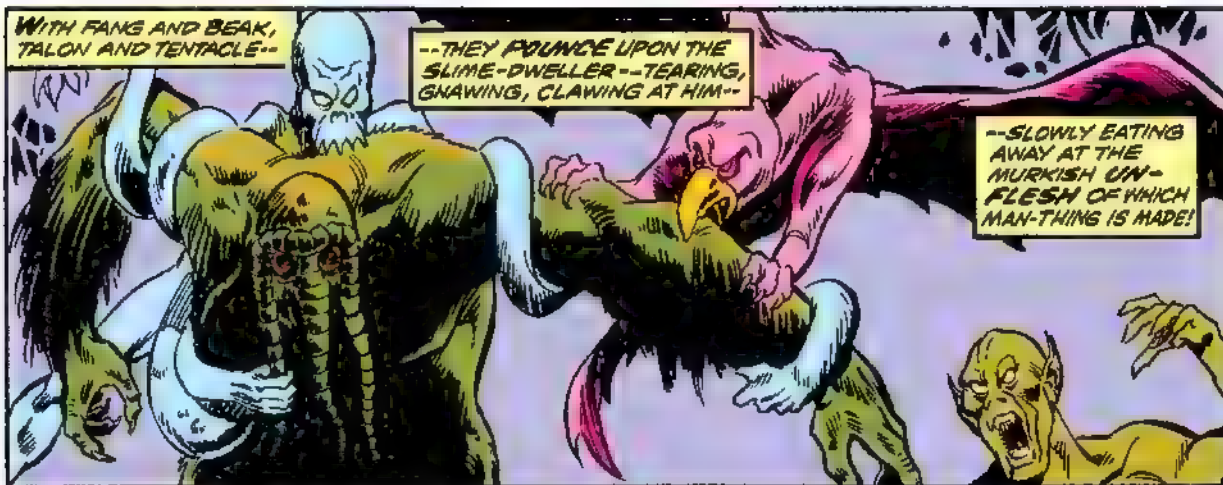
BATTLE for the PALACE of the GODS!

THEY SLITHER, THEY STAGGER, THEY SWOOP FROM THE SKY, THESE MINIONS OF DOOM!

AND YET...

...THE INTENT OF EACH IS THE SAME: DESTROY THE THING FROM THE SWAMP!

AT THE INSTANT OF HIS DEATH-- THE OVERMASTER CLAIMS THE UNIVERSE! ATTACK!!



WITH FANG AND BEAK,
TALON AND TENTACLE--

--THEY POUNCE UPON THE
SLIME-DWELLER--TEARING,
GNAWING, CLAWING AT HIM--

--SLOWLY EATING
AWAY AT THE
MURKISH UN-
FLESH OF WHICH
MAN-THING IS MADE!



MORE OF THEM SPRING
FORWARD TO ATTACK!
FOLLOW ME, DUCK--
WE'LL WARD THEM OFF!

DON'T BE AN
IDIOT, KORREK!
WE CAN'T FIGHT
THIS!



BUT THE WARRIOR PRINCE OF THE WESTLANDS
PAYS NO NEED! HE BOUNDS BOLDLY INTO THE
FRAY, HIS SWORD SPEWING ITS MYSTIC FIRE!

AND HE MAKES A MIND-STUNNING DISCOVERY--!



DIE,
DEMON!
DY--

WHA--?
THIS THING...
IS NOT
ALIVE!



BEHOLD,
DUCK! IT
IS HOLLOW,
LIKE A
CHILD'S
DOLL!

BEHIND
THEIR FEAR-
SOME VISAGE,
THERE IS NO
SUBSTANCE!



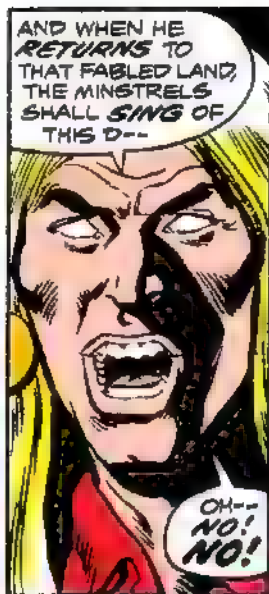
AND BEFORE THE
CRACKLING
SWORD OF
KORREK--
THEY FALL!

LOOK,
FEATHERED
ONE! WE HAVE
NOTHING TO
FEAR FROM
THESE MADMAN'S
TOYS! WE WERE
DUPED ONCE--
BUT NO LONGER,
EH?



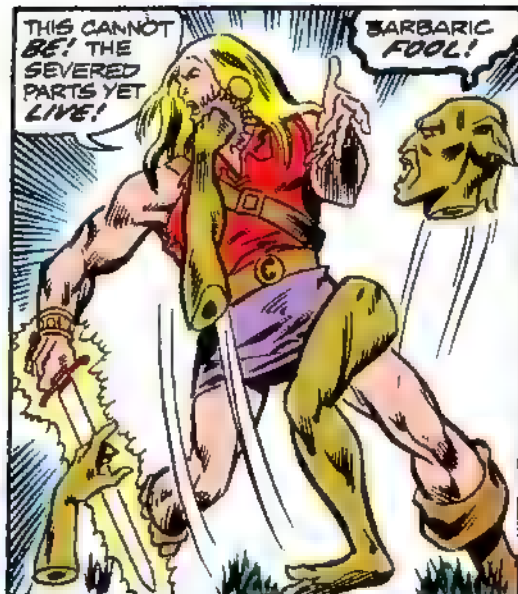
FOR FEAR
WAS OUR
TRUE FOE--
AND WE
HAVE
SLAIN
IT!

PRAISE
BE TO ZOKK!
KORREK OF
KATHARTA
STANDS
TRIUMPH-
ANT!



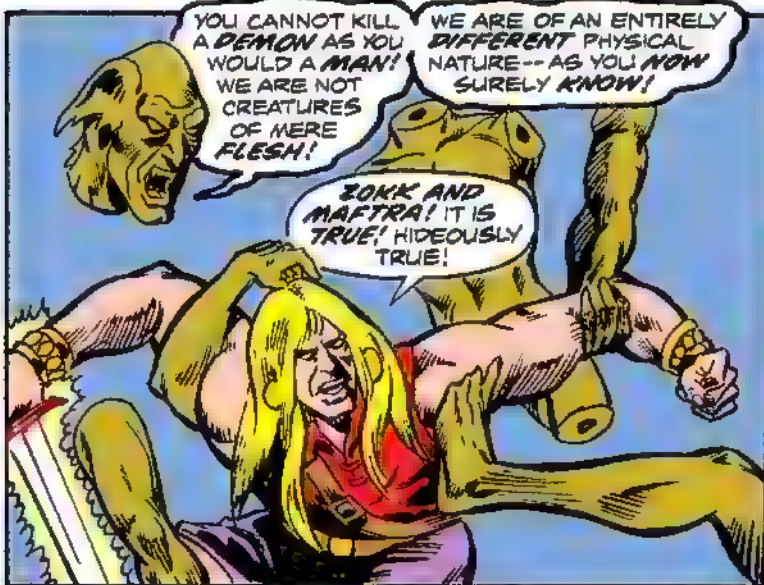
AND WHEN HE
RETURNS TO
THAT FABLED LAND,
THE MINSTRELS
SHALL SING OF
THIS D--

OH--
NO!
NO!



THIS CANNOT
BE! THE
SEVERED
PARTS YET
LIVE!

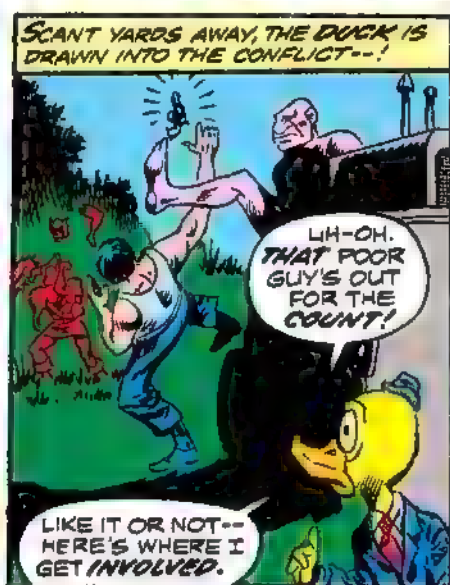
BARBARIC
FOOL!



YOU CANNOT KILL
A DEMON AS YOU
WOULD A MAN!
WE ARE NOT
CREATURES
OF MERE
FLESH!

WE ARE OF AN ENTIRELY
DIFFERENT PHYSICAL
NATURE-- AS YOU NOW
SURELY KNOW!

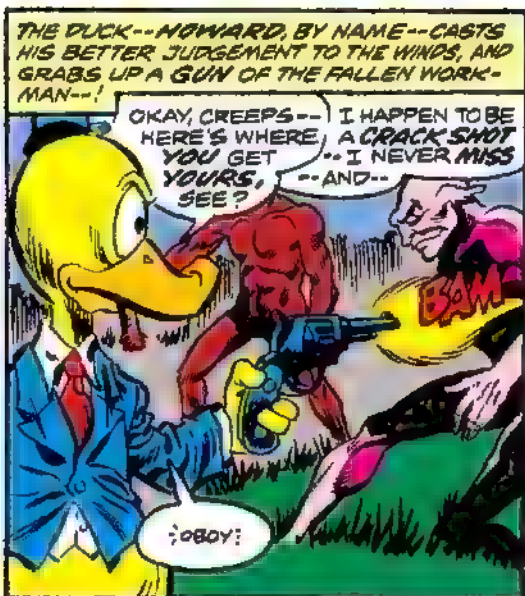
ZOKK AND
MAFTRA! IT IS
TRUE! HIDEOUSLY
TRUE!



SCANT YARDS AWAY, THE DUCK IS
DRAWN INTO THE CONFLICT--!

UH-OH.
THAT POOR
GUY'S OUT
FOR THE
COUNT!

LIKE IT OR NOT--
HERE'S WHERE I
GET INVOLVED.

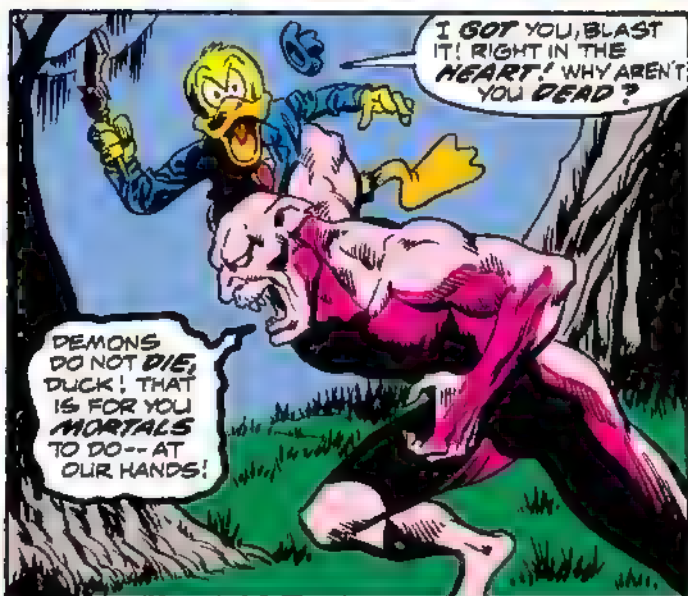


THE DUCK-- NOWARD, BY NAME--CASTS
HIS BETTER JUDGEMENT TO THE WINDS, AND
GRABS UP A GUN OF THE FALLEN WORK-
MAN--!

OKAY, CREEPS-- I HAPPEN TO BE
HERE'S WHERE, A CRACK SHOT
YOU GET YOURS, --AND--
SEE?

BAM

BOBOY!



I GOT YOU, BLAST
IT! RIGHT IN THE
HEART! WHY AREN'T
YOU DEAD?

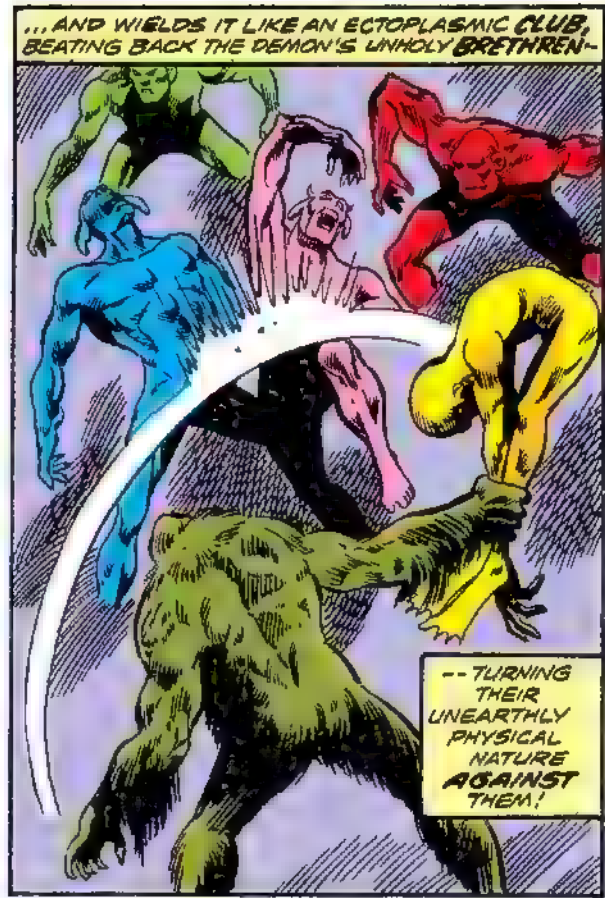
DEMONS
DO NOT DIE,
DUCK! THAT
IS FOR YOU
MORTALS
TO DO-- AT
OUR HANDS!



THEN, SUDDENLY, THE
TIDE OF BATTLE
TURNS-- AS THE
MISSHAPEN
ONCE-MAN
STRIKES BACK!

HIS MOTTLED
ARMS REACH
BEHIND
HIM-- RIP
THE OUT-
WORLDER
FROM
HIS
BACK--!

AND HE BENDS
THE FIEND'S
WIRY FORM
OVER UPON
ITSELF...



... AND WIELDS IT LIKE AN ECTOPLASMIC CLUB,
BEATING BACK THE DEMON'S UNHOLY BRETHREN--

-- TURNING
THEIR
UNEARTHLY
PHYSICAL
NATURE
AGAINST
THEM!



AND NOW, IN
A BURST OF
AMBER
LIGHT
COMES THE
EQUALIZER
IN THIS COMBAT
OF MORTALS-
VERSUS-
MONSTERS--!

AW, NO!
WILLYA
LOOK AT
THIS?!
MORE
LUNACY!

IT--IT'S
HUMAN--
BUT WHOSE
SIDE IS IT
ON? WHO
IS IT?



HE IS CALLED DAKIMH THE ENCHANTER--
THE MAGE WHO DWELLS IN THE CASTLE IN THE
SKY IN THE LAND BETWEEN NIGHT AND DAY!

AND WITH
A PASS OF
HIS HAND
THRU THE
AIR...

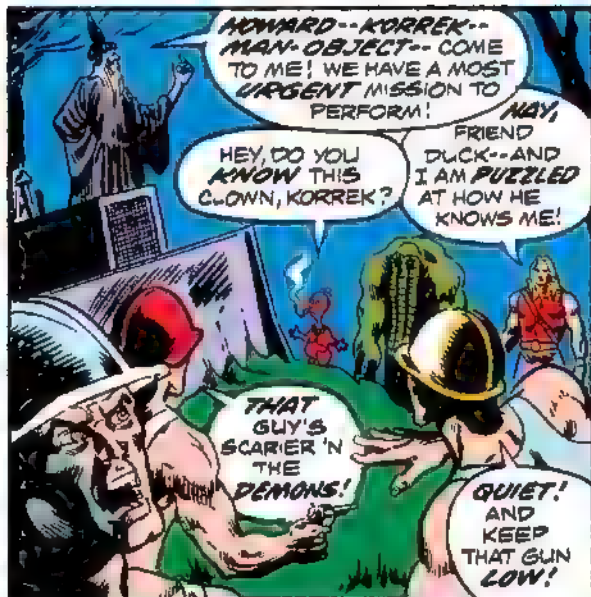
... HE SUMMONS UP
A WHITE WHIRLWIND
THAT ROARS THRU
THE CAMP, SWEEPING
THE OVERMASTER'S
SCREAMING HORDES
INTO ITS VORTEX!



AND WHEN EACH AND EVERY DEVILKIN HAS BEEN THUS ENSNARED, THE CONJURER GESTURES AGAIN--

--CAUSING THE WHIRLWIND TO IMplode--AND ENDING THE DEMONS' BRIEF REIGN OF TERROR!

BEGONE, YE OBRES-- TO YOUR FINAL REST IN THE FLAMING PITS OF SOMNUS! SO SPEAKS DAKIMH!



HOWARD--KORREK-- MAN-OBJECT-- COME TO ME! WE HAVE A MOST URGENT MISSION TO PERFORM!

HEY, DO YOU KNOW THIS CLOWN, KORREK?

NAY, FRIEND DUCK--AND I AM PUZZLED AT HOW HE KNOWS ME!

THAT GUY'S SCARIER 'N THE DEMONS!

QUIET! AND KEEP THAT GUN LOW!



THERE IS NO CAUSE FOR ALARM, GOOD PRINCE. I AM YOUR ALLY--AND YOU, I PRAY, SHALL SOON BE MINE...

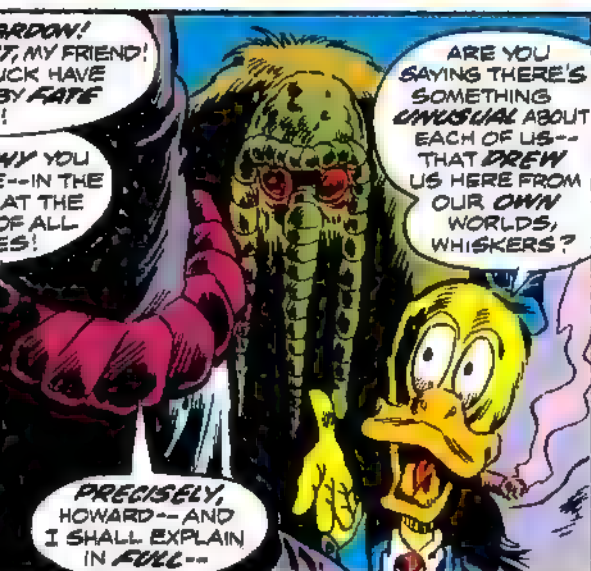
...AS WE FIVE JOIN TO SAVE THE COSMOS!



BAH! I DON'T BELIEVE YOU! IT'S SOME SORCEROUS TRICK!

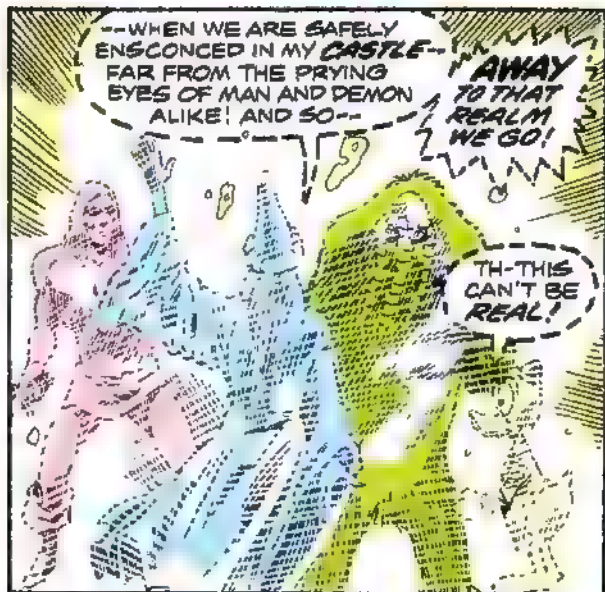
I BEG YOUR PARDON! THIS IS NO JEST, MY FRIEND! YOU AND THE DUCK HAVE BEEN CHOSEN BY FATE TO AID ME!

THAT IS WHY YOU ARE HERE--IN THE SWAMP--AT THE MEXUS OF ALL REALITIES!



ARE YOU SAYING THERE'S SOMETHING UNUSUAL ABOUT EACH OF US-- THAT DREW US HERE FROM OUR OWN WORLDS, WHISKERS?

PRECISELY, HOWARD--AND I SHALL EXPLAIN IN FULL--



--WHEN WE ARE SAFELY ENSCONCED IN MY CASTLE-- FAR FROM THE PRYING EYES OF MAN AND DEMON ALIKE! AND SO--

AWAY TO THAT REALM WE GO!

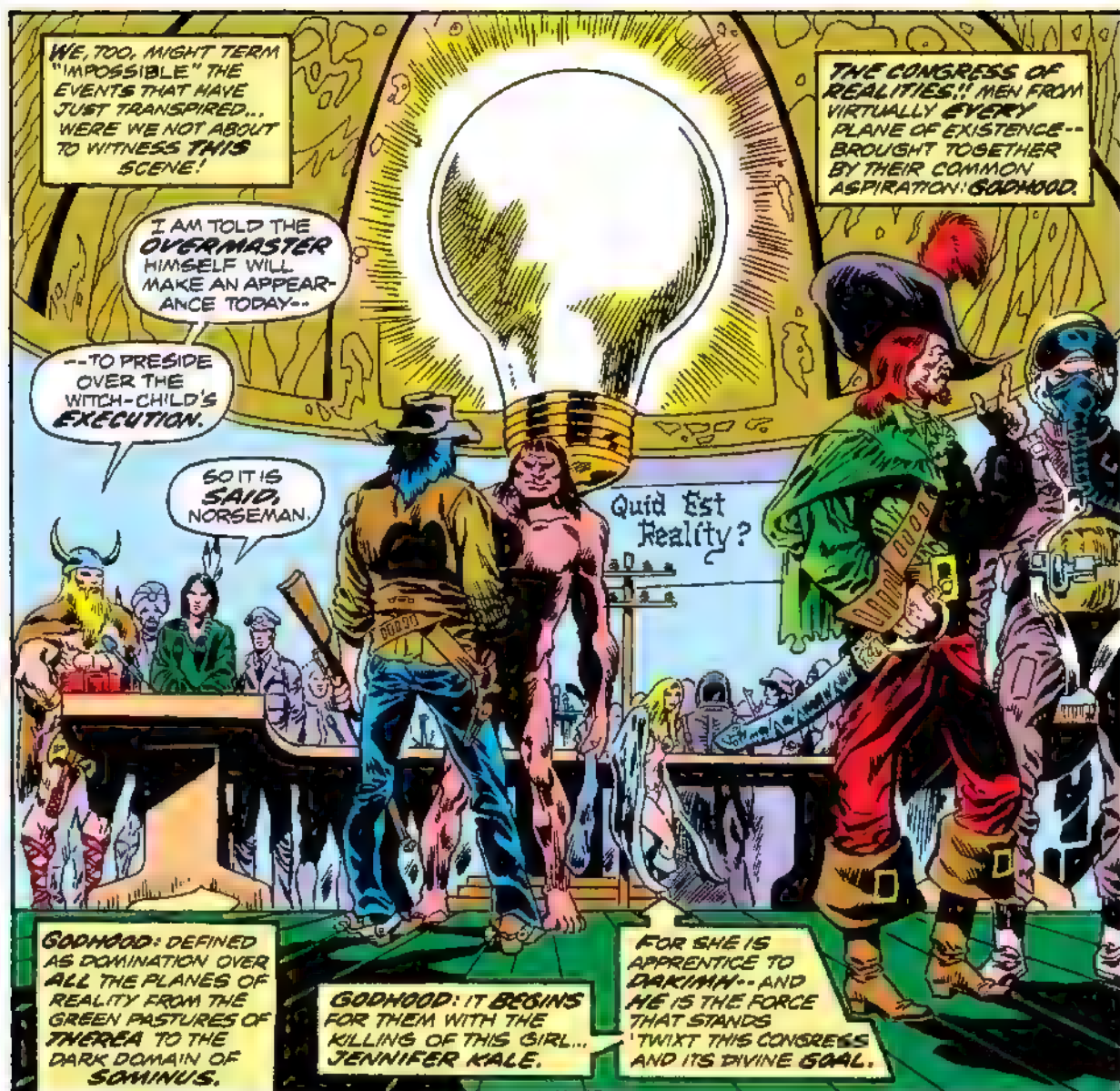
TH-THIS CAN'T BE REAL!

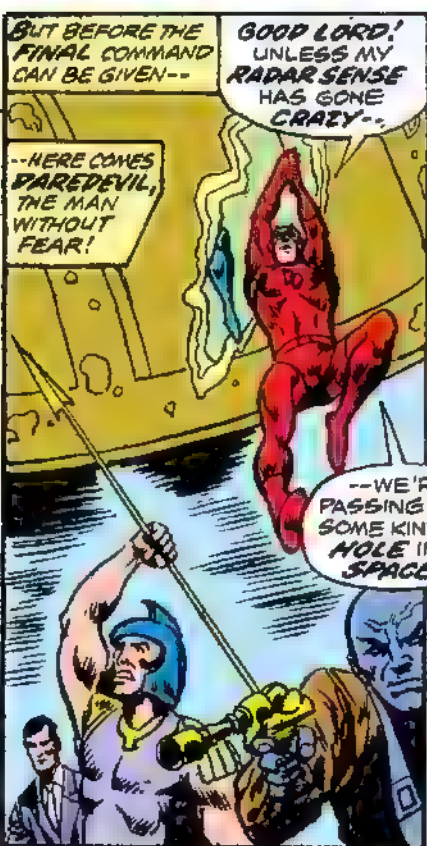
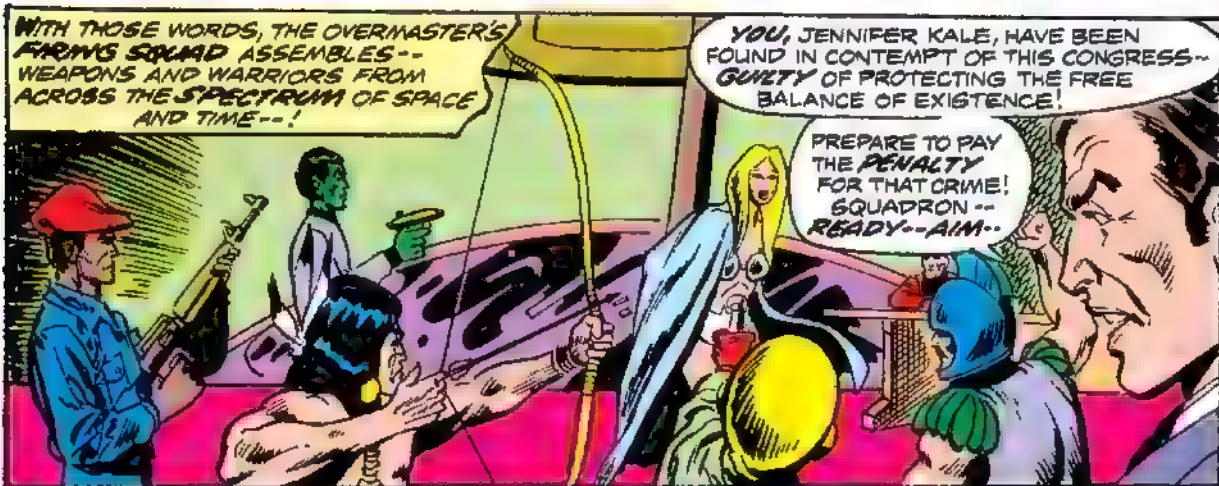
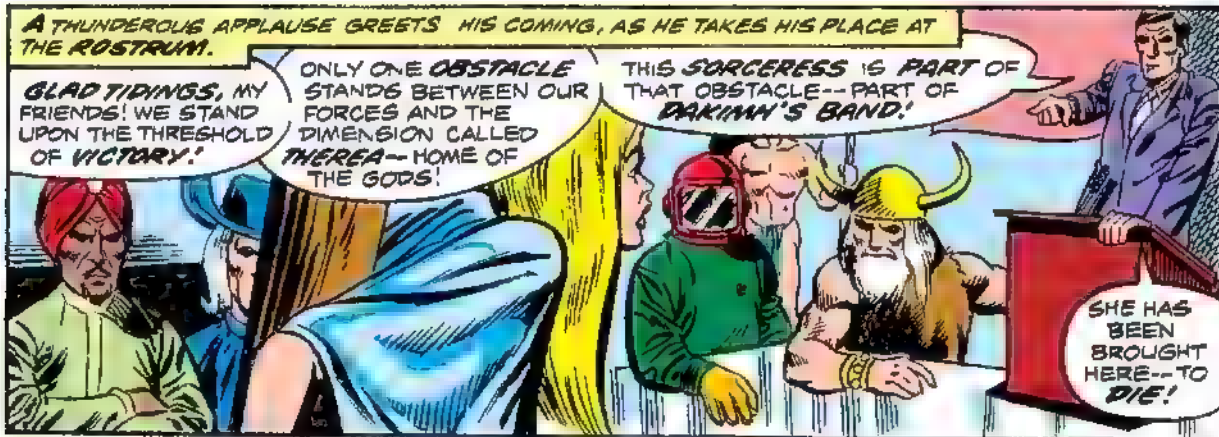


Y'KNOW, I THINK THE DUCKS THEN WE'RE LAST WORDS SAY IT ALL-- IT COULDN'T'VE BEEN AGREED. IT-- JUST DIDN'T HAPPEN, RIGHT?

WHAT--? WHAT DIDN'T HAPPEN?

RI-I-I-GHT!

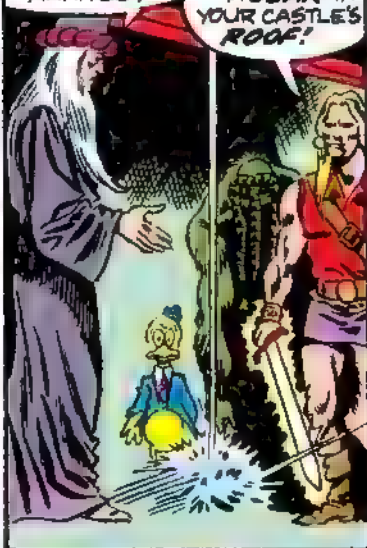




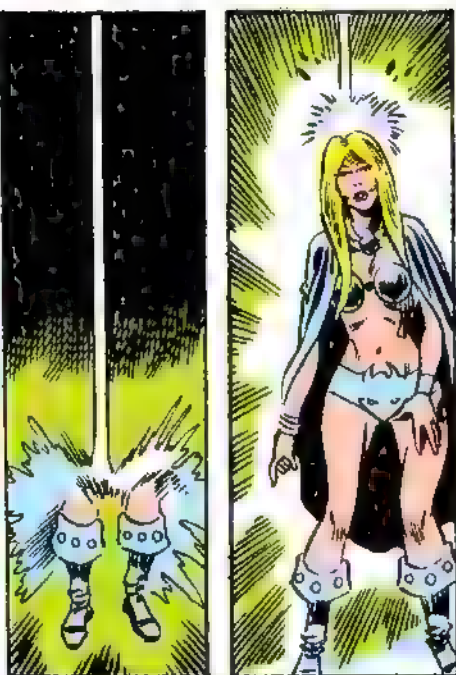
WHILE, ONE DIMENSION
BELOW THE MANIACAL
CONGRESS --

AM! MY SPELL
HAS BEEN
SUCCESSFUL! OUR
FIFTH MEMBER
ARRIVES!

ARE YOU
MAD,
OLD MAN?
'TIS BUT
A LEAK IN
YOUR CASTLE'S
ROOF!

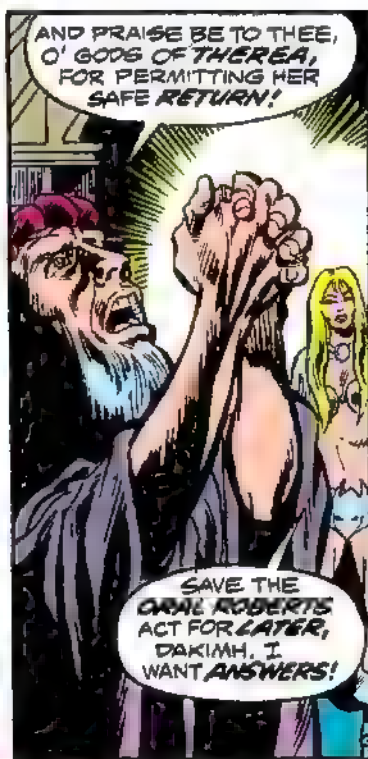


"HARDLY, KORREK--OBSERVE! IT
IS THE FEMALE YOU MISTAKENLY
ASSUMED WAS YOUR ENEMY--MY
APPRENTICE!"



AND PRAISE BE TO THEE,
O' GODS OF THEREA,
FOR PERMITTING HER
SAFE RETURN!

SAVE THE
GRAL ROBERTS
ACT FOR LATER,
DAKIMH. I
WANT ANSWERS!

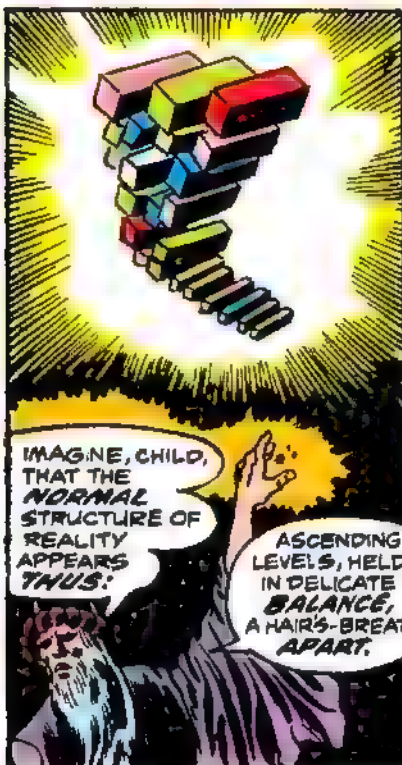


AND WHEN THE TWO HAVE EXCHANGED INCREDIBLE
TALES--!

SO, WE'RE
ALL FRIENDS NOW--
AND OUR JOB IS
TO GET RIGHT
THE COSMIC
AXIS.

THAT'S PEACHY-- BUT IT STILL
DOESN'T EXPLAIN ABOUT
DAREDEVIL!

I KNOW NOT
WHO THIS
DARE-PERSON
IS-- BUT I
THINK I CAN
ACCOUNT FOR
HIS APPEARANCE.



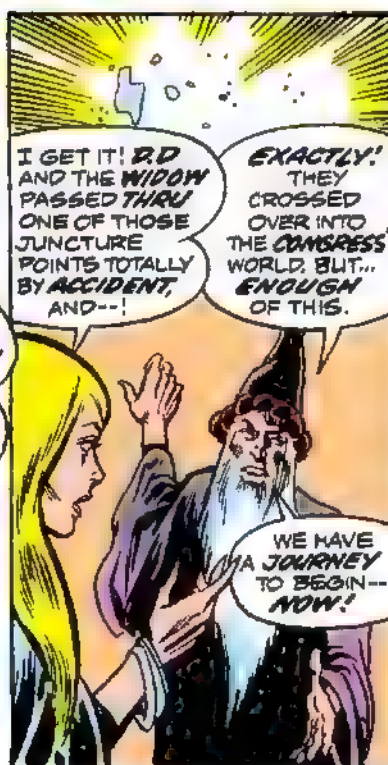
IMAGINE, CHILD,
THAT THE
NORMAL
STRUCTURE OF
REALITY
APPEARS
THUS:

ASCENDING
LEVELS, HELD
IN DELICATE
BALANCE,
A HAIR'S-BREATH
APART.



THIS, HOWEVER,
IS ITS CURRENT
STATE--CHAOS!
EVERY LEVEL
COLLAPSED
UPON ANOTHER.

WHERE ANY
TWO OF THOSE
LEVELS TOUCH,
A JUNCTURE
POINT IS
CREATED--A
DIMENSIONAL
BRIDGE, OF
SORTS.



I GET IT! RD
AND THE WIDOW
PASSED THRU
ONE OF THOSE
JUNCTURE
POINTS TOTALLY
BY ACCIDENT,
AND--!

EXACTLY!
THEY
CROSSED
OVER INTO
THE CONGRESS
WORLD, BUT...
ENOUGH
OF THIS.

WE HAVE
A JOURNEY
TO BEGIN--
NOW!



AND SO, HE LIFTS HIS HAND--

--AND THE WORLD VANISHES!

THERE IS NO NAME FOR WHERE THEY ARE NOW-- EXCEPT PERHAPS... "BETWEEN"!

FOR THIS IS A PLACE OUTSIDE REALITY--OUTSIDE BEING!



COME-- WE MUST CLIMB THE STAIR-- CASE TO ITS END.



BUT THE GOLDEN STAIRS ONLY WIND THEIR WAY TO --NOWHERE-- TO ANOTHER STATE OF UN-NESS...

...A RIBBON THAT LACES THRU THE BETWEEN, TYING IT TO YET ANOTHER KIND OF NULLITY--



--STEPPING STONES! AND ABOVE, BENEATH, AND BETWEEN THEM-- OBLIVION!

KORREK! DUCK! EXERCISE CAUTION! THE REST OF US ARE PROTECTED BY OUR SORCEROUS POWERS!

YOU TWO ARE NOT --YOU CAN DIE HERE!



DUCK! DID YOU HEAR HIM? GO SLOWER! TAKE TIME TO-- DUCK!

NO!!

I--I TRIPPED! I'M FALLING!!



DO NOT ATTEMPT TO FOLLOW, KORREK, LEST--

BUT-- IS THERE NOTHING YOU CAN DO?

FOR POOR HOWARD--
NO. BUT I CAN DO
SOMETHING I **SHOULD**
HAVE DONE EARLIER--!

"I CAN **PROTECT** YOU
-- WITH THIS MYSTIC
HELMET."

NOW, YOU MAY
FOLLOW WITHOUT
FEAR, KORREK--
ON THIS **NEXT**
LEG OF THE
JOURNEY--

--THRU A
SPACE DEVOID
OF **ALL** BUT
AIR AND LIGHT!
COME!

'T WAS MY
HASTE THAT
COST THE
DUCK HIS
LIFE.

IF WE **SUCCEED**
AT THIS QUEST--
I'LL HAVE TO **LIVE**
WITH THAT TRUTH--
FOREVER.

AND SO EACH IS
ADRIPT WITH HIS
OR HER OWN
THOUGHTS--

--SAVE THE MAN-
THING... WHO HAS
NO THOUGHTS!

THEY **TUMBLE**
ONWARD.

UNTIL....!

ZOKK!
WHAT IS
THIS
PLACE?!

YOU ARE
SEEING THE
SHAMP--AS
IT **TRULY** IS!

AND THERE IS THE CAUSE
OF OUR INTERDIMENSIONAL
TRAUMA-- THAT TOTTERING
NEEDLE!

IT IS THE **COSMIC AXIS**--
AND WE MUST SET IT
ARIGHT!

AND SO THEY
SET THEM-
SELVES TO THE
AWESOME,
YET **DELICATE,**
TASK...!

BUT, NO SOONER HAVE THEY
BEGUN-- THAN THE **UTTERLY**
UNTHINKABLE OCCURS!

THE VERY FABRIC OF REALITY
IS RENT ASUNDER-- AND FROM
OUT OF THE RIP IN THE SKY--
THEY POUR IN A SEEMINGLY
ENDLESS STREAM:

THE
CONGRESS
OF
REALITIES!

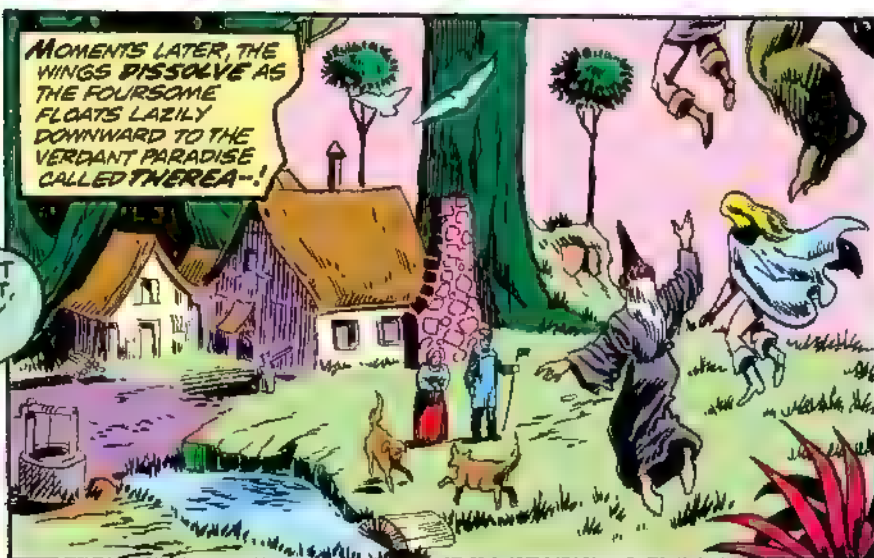
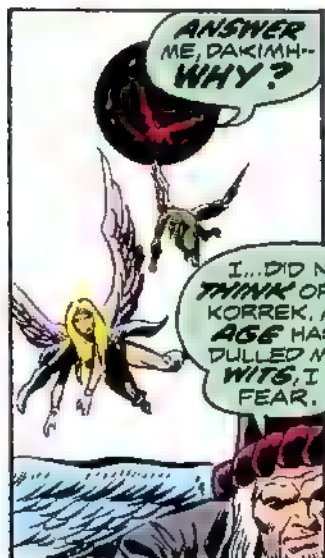
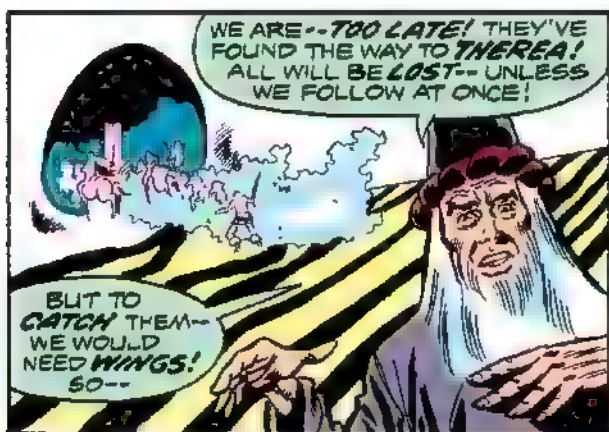
DINOSAURS AND TANKS--
MUSKETS AND LASER
PISTOLS-- CAVEMEN AND
SUPERMEN-- FLYING,
GALLOPING, ROLLING--
TOWARD INFINITY--!

SPECIAL NOTE FROM STEVE
GERBER TO OUR DEMON
PROOF-READERS: THIS PAGE
IS SUPPOSED TO BE READ SIDE-
WAYS, BANG! (OR, THE GERBER
COURSE STRIKES AGAIN!)

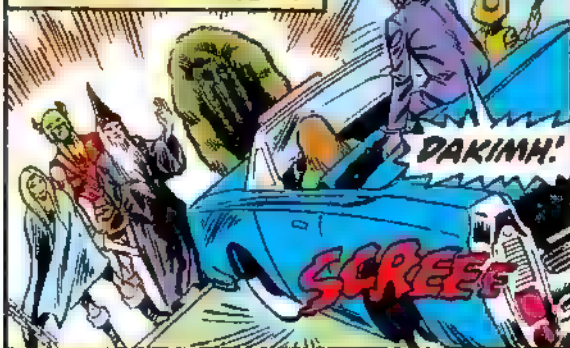


BEINGS
FROM THEN
AND NOW
AND WILL-
BE...

...AND
NEVER.



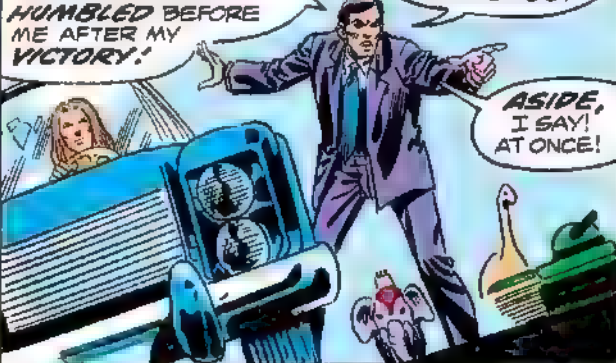
DAKIMH DOES NOT REPLY.
RATHER... HE WINKS--!



AND THAT LEAVES THEM HERE: AT THE DRAW-BRIDGE ENTRANCE TO THE GODS' PALACE--AND DIRECTLY IN THE PATH OF THE OVERMASTER'S CAR!

DAKIMH, YOU OLD FOOL!
YOU'RE LUCKY I DIDN'T
RUN YOU OVER--AND I
WOULD HAVE, IF I DIDN'T
WISH TO SEE YOU
HUMBLED BEFORE
ME AFTER MY
VICTORY!

NOW, STAND ASIDE!
THE PALACE BELONGS
TO ME! I AM RULER
OF THE
UNIVERSE!



ASIDE,
I SAY!
AT ONCE!

NO! YOUR CONQUEST IS A
SHAM-- UNTIL YOU DEFEAT
YOUR ULTIMATE ENEMY!
HIM! THE MAN-
OBJECT!



THE RESULT
OF ALL REALITIES
GONE MAD--
AT THEIR
CROSSROADS,
THE SWAMP!

DO YOU THINK I
FEAR THAT WALKING
MASS OF MURK,
MAGE?



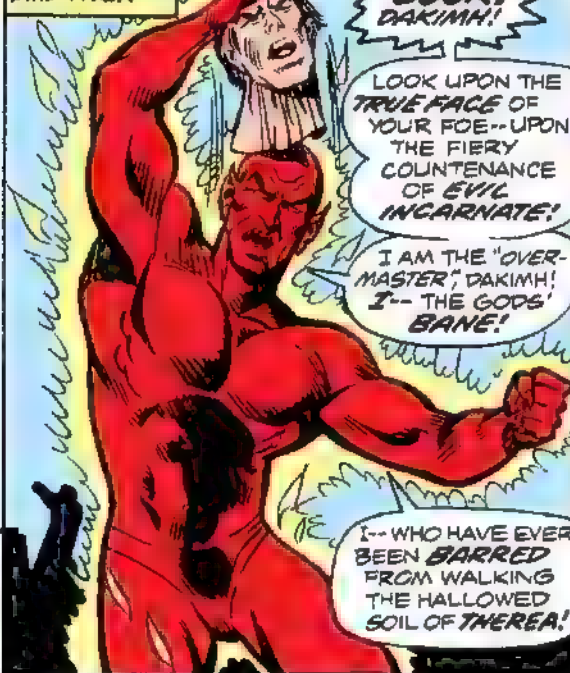
THEN, LET
ME SHOW
YOU SOME-
THING...

THE OVERMASTER CLUTCH-
ES AT HIS SCALP-- AND
PULLS--



--GATHERING SKIN
INTO HIDEOUS
FOLDS-- STRETCHING
IT-- KNEEDING IT--!

AND THEN--



LOOK,
DAKIMH!

LOOK UPON THE
TRUE FACE OF
YOUR FOE--UPON
THE FIERY
COUNTENANCE
OF EVIL
INCARNATE!

I AM THE "OVER-
MASTER", DAKIMH!
I-- THE GODS'
BANE!

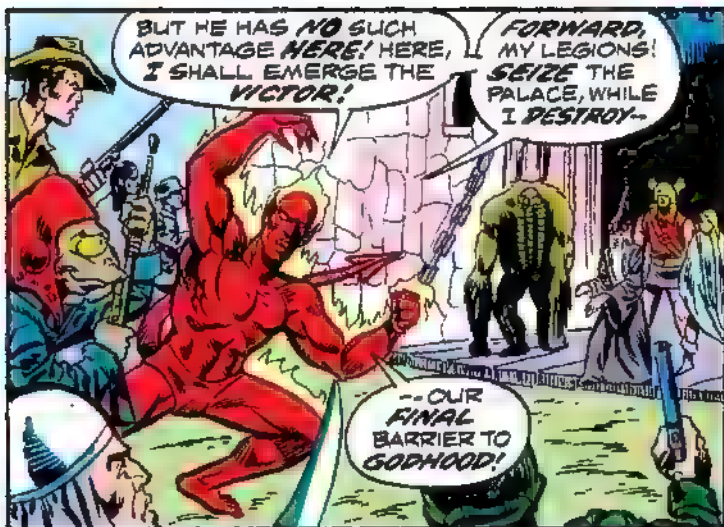
I-- WHO HAVE EVER
BEEN BARRED
FROM WALKING
THE HALLOWED
SOIL OF THEREA!

I-- THE
NETHER
SPAWN!



ALL NEED FOR
PRETENSE IS
ENDED NOW--
SO LET THE
BATTLE
COMMENCE!

TWICE BEFORE
HAVE I CLASHED
WITH THE SWAMP
BEING-- ONCE
ON HIS HOME-
GROUND, ONCE
IN A LAND OF
ILLUSION WHERE
I COULD NOT
HARM HIM--!



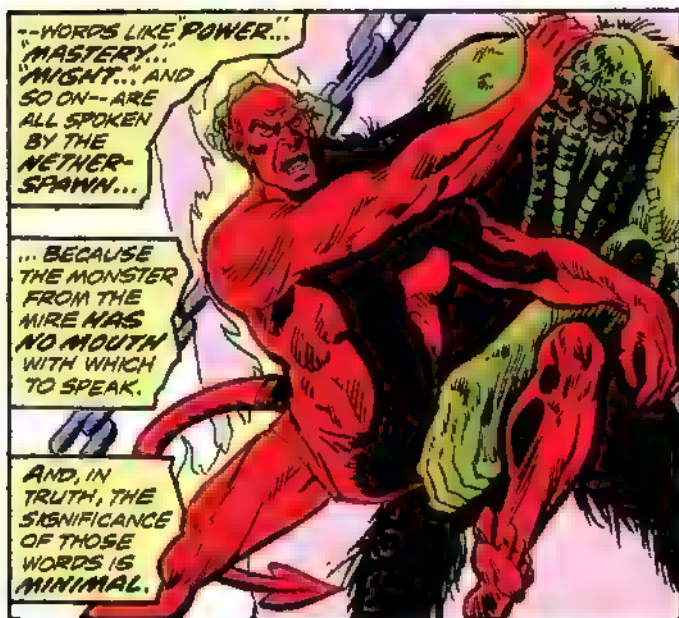
BUT HE HAS NO SUCH ADVANTAGE HERE! HERE, I SHALL EMERGE THE VICTOR!

FORWARD, MY LEGIONS! SEIZE THE PALACE, WHILE I DESTROY--

--OUR FINAL BARRIER TO GODHOOD!



THE WORDS SPOKEN IN THE ENSUING STRUGGLE--



--WORDS LIKE 'POWER'... 'MASTERY'... 'MIGHT'... AND SO ON-- ARE ALL SPOKEN BY THE NETHER-SPAWN...

...BECAUSE THE MONSTER FROM THE MIRE HAS NO MOUTH WITH WHICH TO SPEAK.

AND, IN TRUTH, THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THOSE WORDS IS MINIMAL.



SO LET US CONCENTRATE INSTEAD ON THE ACTIONS OF THE COMBATANTS-- AND WHAT THEY MEAN.

THE DEMON'S WEAPON IS THAT OF FLAME. IT DESTROYS-- BUT IT CAN ALSO PART THE CURTAINS OF DARKNESS AND IGNORANCE.

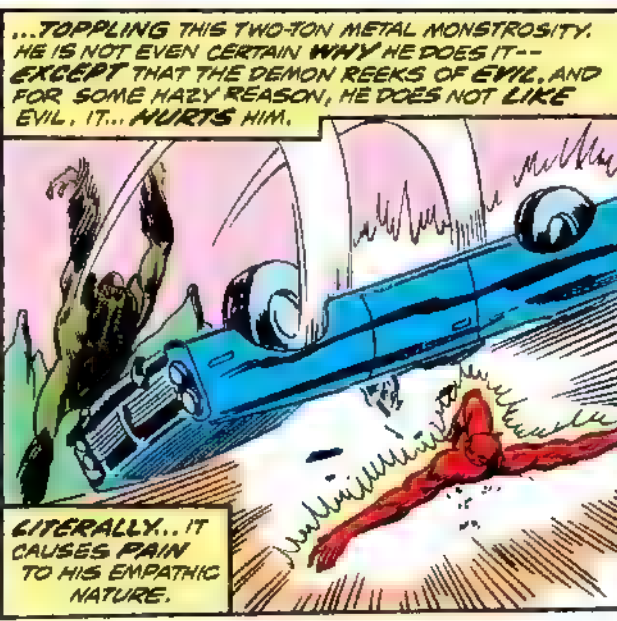
WHICH IT CAN... DEPENDING UPON WHO WIELDS IT.



THE MAN-THING'S WEAPON IS BRUTE STRENGTH-- APPLIED TO THE ERSTWHILE CONVEYANCE OF THIS WOULD-BE LORD OF THE COSMOS...

...THE VEHICLE WHICH HAS COME TO SYMBOLIZE MAN'S MATERIAL LUST.

IT IS NOT AN EASY TASK FOR HIM...



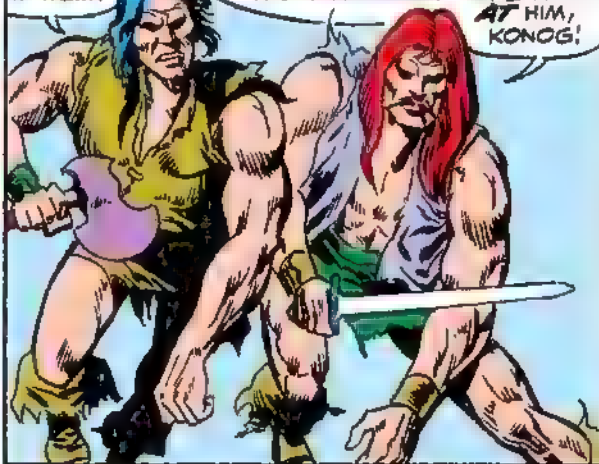
...TOPPLING THIS TWO-TON METAL MONSTROSITY. HE IS NOT EVEN CERTAIN WHY HE DOES IT-- EXCEPT THAT THE DEMON REEKS OF EVIL. AND FOR SOME HAZY REASON, HE DOES NOT LIKE EVIL. IT... HURTS HIM.

LITERALLY... IT CAUSES PAIN TO HIS EMPATHIC NATURE.

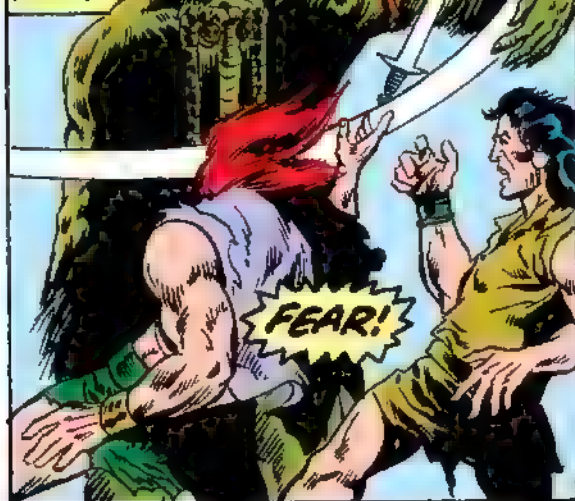
IN SHORT, THE BRIEF SCENE WE HAVE JUST WITNESSED IS PREGNANT WITH PHILOSOPHICAL IMPLICATIONS. BUT THESE TWO OF THE NETHER-SPAWN'S--DON'T CARE!



DON'T YOU SEE? IF WE...!



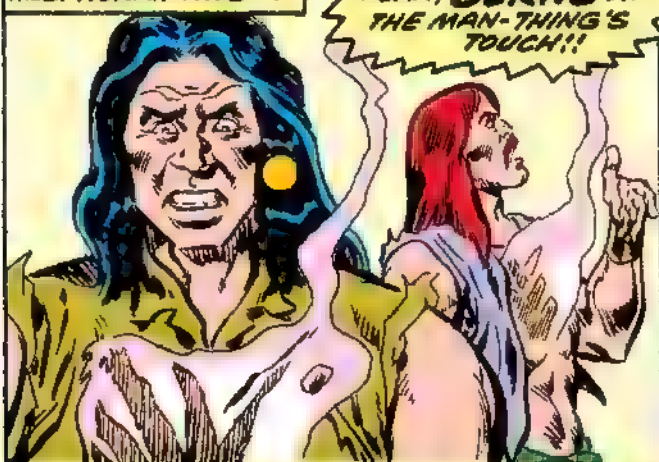
MORE EVIL...
MORE PAIN...
AND NOW,
SOMETHING
WORSE:



AND FEAR IS THE SINGLE EMOTION THE MAN-THING COATHES! ON SENSING IT, HE LOSES ALL CONTROL--REACHES OUT--LAYS HIS HANDS HEAVY ON ITS SOURCE!



AND THE RESULTS ARE MOST HORRIFYING--!



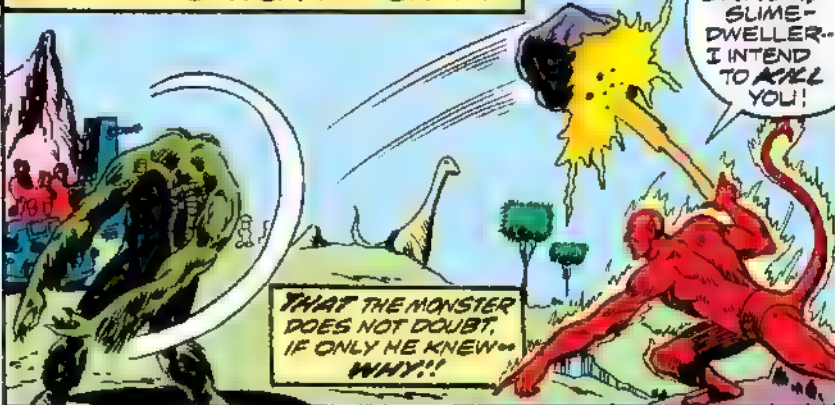
FOR NOW, THESE MEN STAND STARING IN SHOCK AT THE FIVE FINGERED SCARS UPON THEIR CHESTS. IN A MOMENT...

...THEY WILL COLLAPSE IN AGONY, EVEN AS THEIR MASTER RISES AGAIN!



THE AIR SUDDENLY FILLS WITH THE STENCH OF SULFUR AS HE WELLS UP FROM THE MOLTEN SLAG THAT HAD BEEN THE CAR!

AND ALMOST AT ONCE, THE CONFLICT IS RENEWED-- FIERCER THAN EVER--!



THAT THE MONSTER DOES NOT DOUBT, IF ONLY HE KNEW-- WHY!!

MAKE NO ERROR, SLIME-DWELLER-- I INTEND TO KILL YOU!

DAKIMH-- I DON'T GET IT! IF THIS IS THE PALACE OF GODS-- WHERE ARE THE GODS?

WHY AREN'T THEY HERE-- HELPING DEFEND THEIR OWN PALACE?

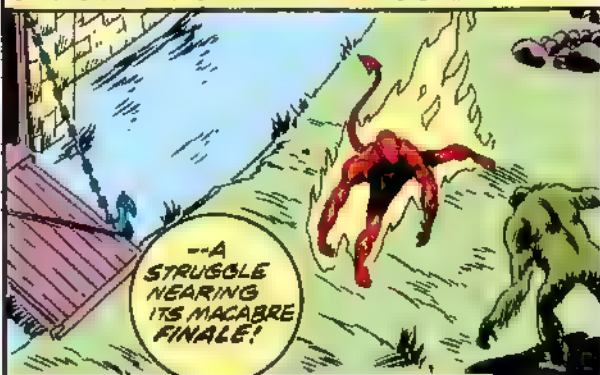


I CANNOT ANSWER YOU, CHILD... NOT YET.



EXCEPT TO SAY THAT IT IS... NOT THE NATURE OF GODS TO DO THAT. YOU WILL SEE.

A PUZZLE. AND WHETHER OR NOT WE LEARN ITS SOLUTION HINGES UPON THE OUTCOME OF THE MAN-MONSTER'S STRUGGLE--



--A STRUGGLE NEARING ITS MACABRE FINALE!



THE WATER OF THE CASTLE MOAT! SIMON-- PURE THEREAN WATER! NO!!

THE MAN-THING CANNOT FATHOM HIS ADVERSARY'S WORDS-- OR ANY WORDS-- BUT AGAIN HE SENSES FEAR-- TERRIBLE FEAR!

AND HE SENSES FURTHER THAT IT HAS TO DO WITH THE WATER-- THIS PARTICULAR WATER, WHICH THE VEGETABLE PART OF HIS MAKE-UP TELLS HIM IT IS DIFFERENT FROM ANY OTHER-- WHOLLY WITHOUT IMPURITY!

HE CANNOT, HOWEVER, MAKE THE MENTAL LEAP OF LOGIC--

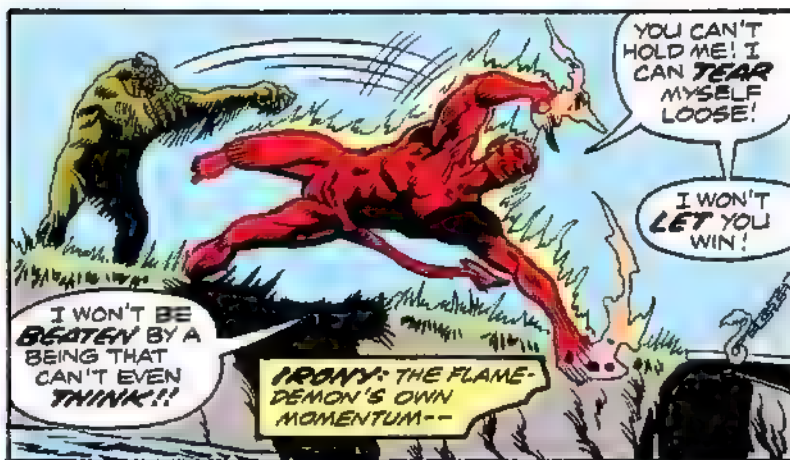


--THAT WOULD TELL HIM WHY A CREATURE LIKE THE NETHER-SPAWN WOULD FIND TERROR IN SUCH A THING.

BUT HE ACCEPTS THE FACT-- AND LUNGES-- PUSHES--!



AND HE DOES NOT STOP-- EVEN WHEN THE FIEND'S FEAR CAUSES HIS UNEARTHLY FORM TO BEGIN TO MELT IN THE SWAMP-LURKER'S CLAW-LIKE HANDS!

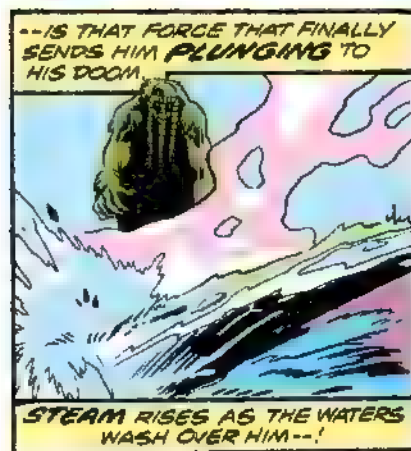


I WON'T BE BEATEN BY A BEING THAT CAN'T EVEN THINK!!

IRONY: THE FLAME-DEMON'S OWN MOMENTUM--

YOU CAN'T HOLD ME! I CAN TEAR MYSELF LOOSE!

I WON'T LET YOU WIN!



--IS THAT FORCE THAT FINALLY SENDS HIM PLUNGING TO HIS DOOM.

STEAM RISES AS THE WATERS WASH OVER HIM--!



AND WHEN THE TORRID MIST CLEARS...

THE FLAME, THE PASSION OF THE EVIL IS DEAD, AND ALL THAT REMAINS IS...

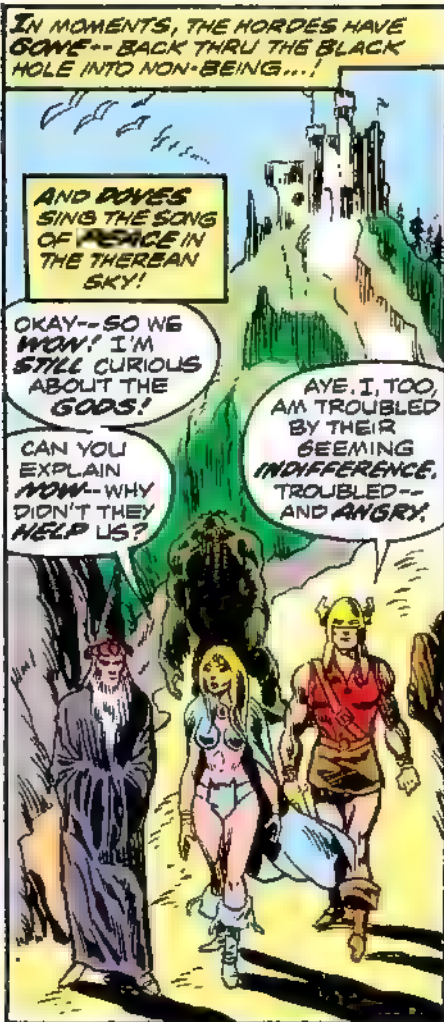
...ITS GRAY, WITHERED CORE!



TO US, THE SIGHT OF THIS WIZENED, ATROPHIED MOUND OF METAPLASM IS MERELY APPALLING. BUT TO HIS FORMER FOLLOWERS--

IT'S THE END! CHARLIE-THING WON! C'MON, YOU SONS O' LEECHES-- RETREAT WITH HONOR!

AYE--LEST WE FALL VICTIM TO THE OLD MAN'S SURGERY!



IN MOMENTS, THE HORDES HAVE GONE-- BACK THRU THE BLACK HOLE INTO NON-BEING...

AND DOVES SING THE SONG OF PEACE IN THE THERAN SKY!

OKAY-- SO WE WON! I'M STILL CURIOUS ABOUT THE GODS!

CAN YOU EXPLAIN NOW-- WHY DIDN'T THEY HELP US?

AYE, I, TOO, AM TROUBLED BY THEIR SEEMING INDIFFERENCE. TROUBLED-- AND ANGRY!



BUT THERE IS NO CAUSE FOR ANGER, KORREK.

YOU SEE, THE PROBLEM IS NOT WITH THE GODS-- BUT RATHER WITH MAN'S CONCEPTION OF WHAT GODS SHOULD BE.

WE CONCEIVE THEM AS IMMENSE, COMPLEX BEINGS-- WHO DWELL IN REALMS WITH TOWERS AND SPIRES OF GOLD.

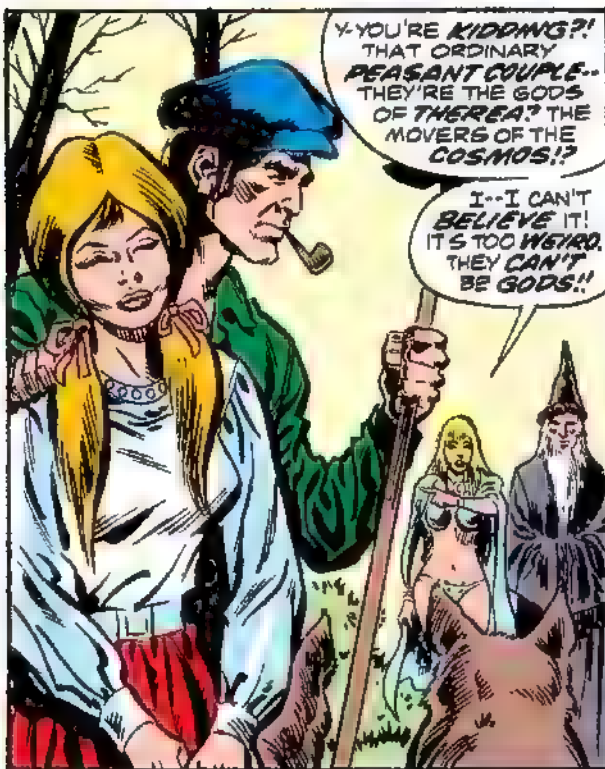
BUT NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH!



YOU SEE-- THIS IS THE REAL PALACE!

THIS HUMBLE COTTAGE, SURROUNDED BY THINGS-- OF NATURE, THINGS OF PEACE.

QUIET, SIMPLE, LOVING THINGS-- LIKE THE GODS THEMSELVES-- UPON WHOM YOU NOW GAZE!



Y-- YOU'RE KIDDING?! THAT ORDINARY PEASANT COUPLE-- THEY'RE THE GODS OF THERA? THE MOVERS OF THE COSMOS?!

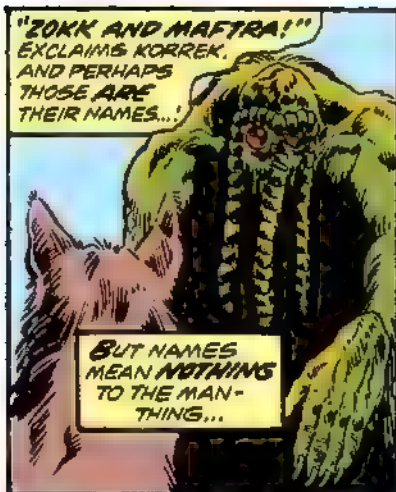
I-- I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! IT'S TOO WEIRD. THEY CAN'T BE GODS!!



OF COURSE NOT, CHILD. THEY ARE MERE CARETAKERS.

THESE ARE THE GODS!

"THINK OF YOUR EARTHLY FOLKLORE ABOUT THEM: MAN'S BEST FRIEND-- EVER LOYAL-- WATCHERS OVER THE HOME.



"ZOKK AND MAETRA!"
EXCLAIMS KORREK,
AND PERHAPS
THOSE ARE
THEIR NAMES...

BUT NAMES
MEAN NOTHING
TO THE MAN-
THING...



...AND NEITHER DOES
COSMIC STATUS.



HE MERELY SENSES THAT
THESE ARE FRIENDLY
BEINGS, KIND
AND GOOD.

THUS,
HE
REACHES OUT
ALMOST
SOFTLY--
TO TOUCH.

AND AS HIS
MOTTLED
FINGERS
MAKE
CONTACT--

IN A SINGLE
DAZZLING
INSTANT...

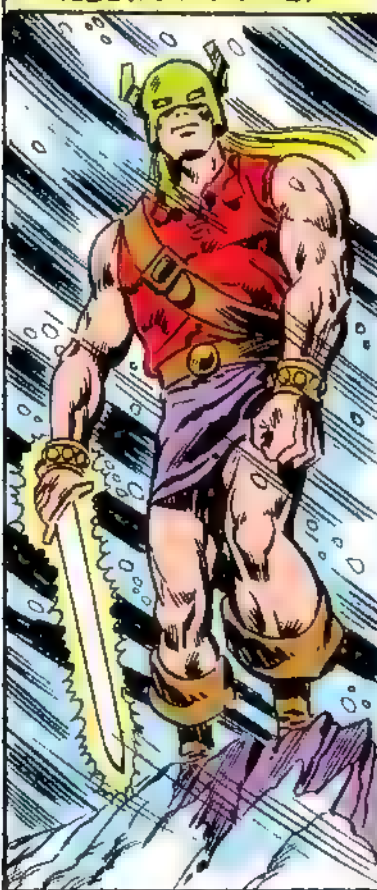
ALL
EXISTENCE
BURSTS
OPEN!

THE FOURSOME SEES AND HEARS AND
FEELS EVERY COLOR AND SOUND AND SENSATION
THERE IS OR EVER WILL BE--!

AND THEY GO
REELING
ACROSS THE
SPECTRUM OF
REALITIES--

--BACK TO
WHENCE THEY
CAME!

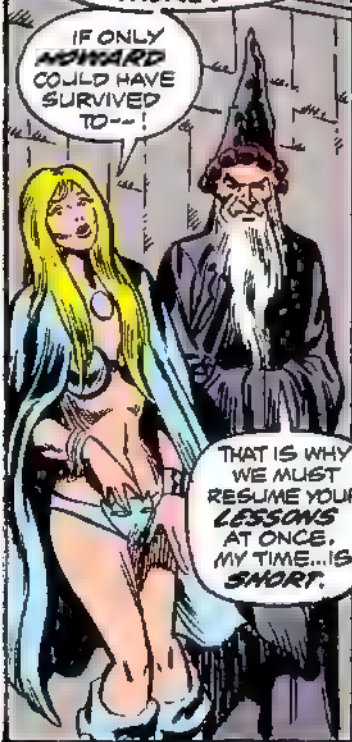
KORREK, WARRIOR PRINCE OF
KATHARTA--HIS SOUL NOW
IMBUED WITH A SERENITY IT
HAS NEVER KNOWN BEFORE--
STANDS ATOP A SNOWSWEPT
WESTLANDS PEAK-- AND
SMILES. HE IS HOME.



AND IN THE LAND BETWEEN
NIGHT AND DAY, THE AGED
ENCHANTER AND HIS
YOUNG APPRENTICE
RETURN TO THE CASTLE IN
THE SKY... MORE THEN EVER
AWARE OF THEIR AWESOME
RESPONSIBILITY.

THE UNIVERSE IS SO--
SO TOTAL, DAKIMH!
NOW THAT I'VE SEEN
IT--I MUST LEARN
MORE!

IF ONLY
HOWARD
COULD HAVE
SURVIVED
TO--!



THAT IS WHY
WE MUST
RESUME YOUR
LESSONS
AT ONCE.
MY TIME...IS
SHORT.

THE MAN-THING, TOO, HAS
RETURNED TO HIS RIGHTFUL
PLACE--THOUGH THERE IS NO
SENSE OF CALM OR WONDER
IN HIM. THERE IS ONLY THE
OMNIPRESENT MAZE, OBSCUR-
ING ALL THOUGHT, ALL MEMORY.

OH, HE RECALLS
SOME OF THIS
EXPERIENCE--
THE FRIENDLY D-O...
OR WAS IT G-O...
OR...AND THEN,
HE FORGETS
EVEN THAT.



NEXT
FOR A
**DEATH-TRAP
MAN-THING!**



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68 BIG PAGES

GIANT-SIZE MAN-THING

PANIC IN THE CITY... AS THE
MOST STARTLING SLIME-CREATURE
OF ALL STALKS THE HALLOWED HALLS
OF A TERRIFIED HIGH SCHOOL!

EXTRA!

HOWARD THE DUCK
FACES DEATH AT
THE HANDS OF
GORKO, THE
MAN-FROG

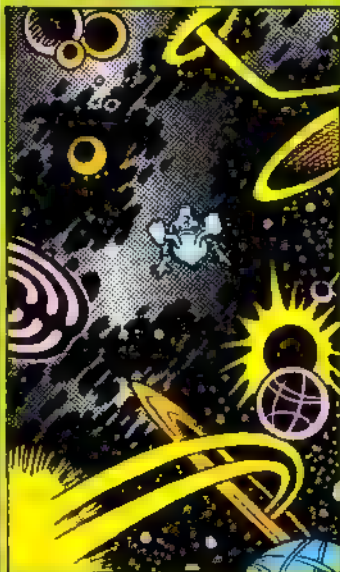
BRUNNER

THERE ARE WORLDS UPON WORLDS
... WORLDS WITHIN WORLDS
... WORLDS WITHOUT END.



EVERY MAN'S MIND
IS A UNIVERSE.

AND BETWEEN THOSE UNI-
VERSSES ARE PLACES LIKE THIS,
WHERE REALITIES COLLIDE.



WORLDS WHERE ALL AND
NOTHING ARE SYNONYMOUS...

WORLDS NOT MEANT FOR LIVING
BEINGS... UNFIT FOR CREATURES
WHO MUST REASON...



FOR LOGIC, RATIONALE, EVEN
SANITY HAVE NO MEANING HERE.

SO CONSIDER
THE PLIGHT OF
HOWARD
THE DUCK!

FOR MONTHS, BY OUR RECKONING,
HE HAS BEEN FALLING THROUGH
THIS UN-WORLD, THIS VOID
BETWEEN...

...ALONE WITH HIS THOUGHTS
IN SOUNDLESS SPACE, LEFT
TO WONDER WHETHER OR
NOT HE EXISTS.

FROG

DEATH!

INTRODUCING A NEW
CONCEPT IN COMIC
LITERATURE BY

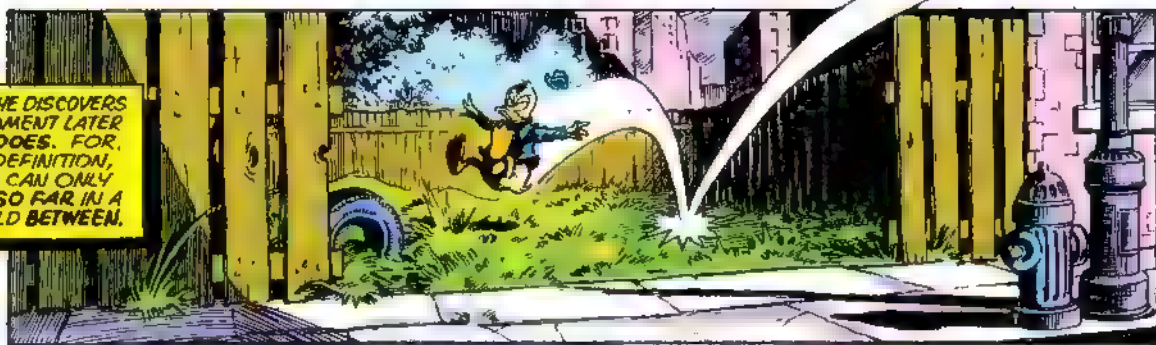
STEVE GERBER
Writer

FRANK BRUNNER
Artist & Colorist

TOM ORZ
lettering

CARL BARKS
spiritual guide

AS HE DISCOVERS
A MOMENT LATER
HE DOES. FOR,
BY DEFINITION,
ONE CAN ONLY
GO SO FAR IN A
WORLD BETWEEN.



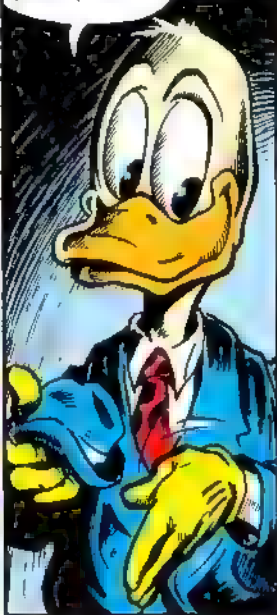
IT--IT'S GROUND! SOLID
GROUND! I'M SITTING ON
THE GROUND!! NOT
FALLING-- SITTING!

AND THERE'S
GRASS-- AND
TREES-- AND
BUILDINGS.
I'M HOME!
I MADE IT!

MISTER,
ARE YOU
ALL RIGHT?



OH, SURE-- JUST A
LITTLE SHAKY, NATCH,
BUT IT'S GREAT TO BE
BACK, AN'--



WAAAAGH!

I'M BACK ON THE
WORLD OF TALKING
HAIRLESS APES!

HEY--
YOU'RE A
DUCK!



THERE AIN'T NO JUSTICE!
YA SAVE THE UNIVERSE*,
AN' WHAT DOES IT GET YA?

"YOU'RE A DUCK!"
--THAT'S WHAT IT
GETS YA!

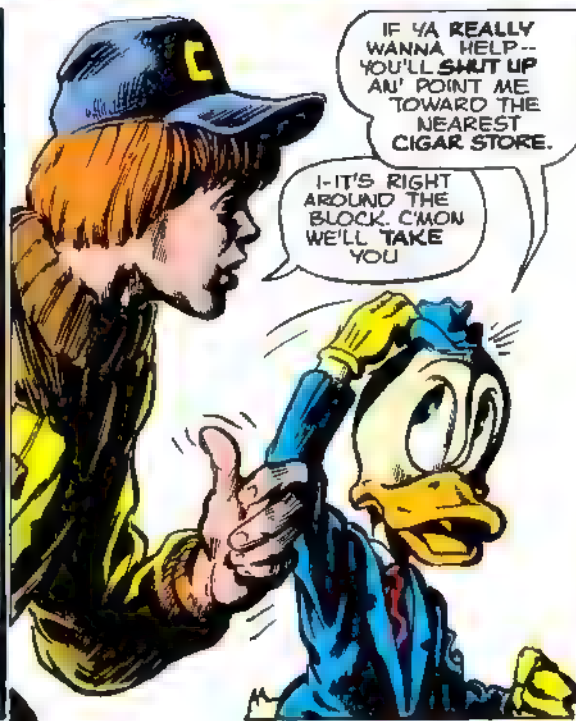
M-MAYBE
WE CAN
HELP YOU?

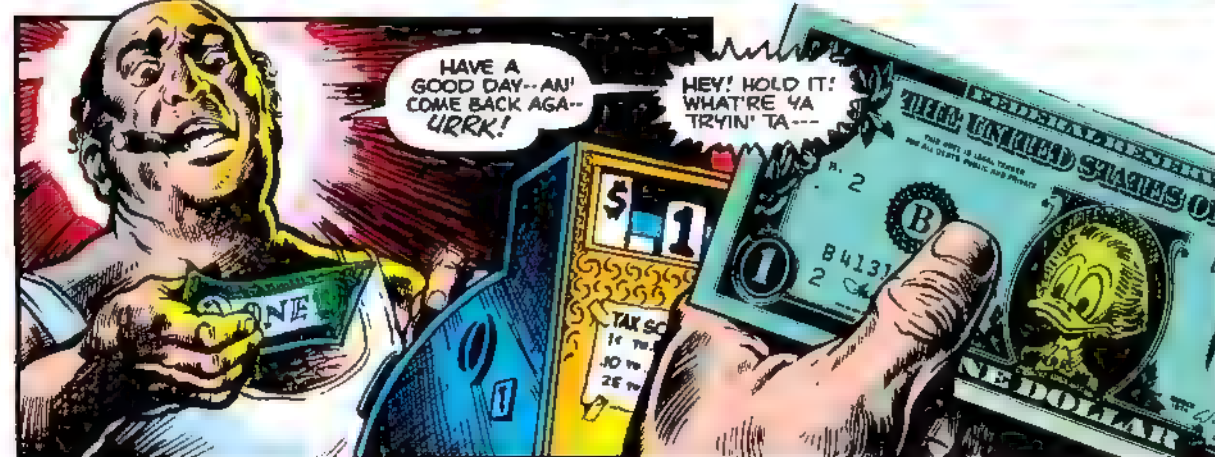
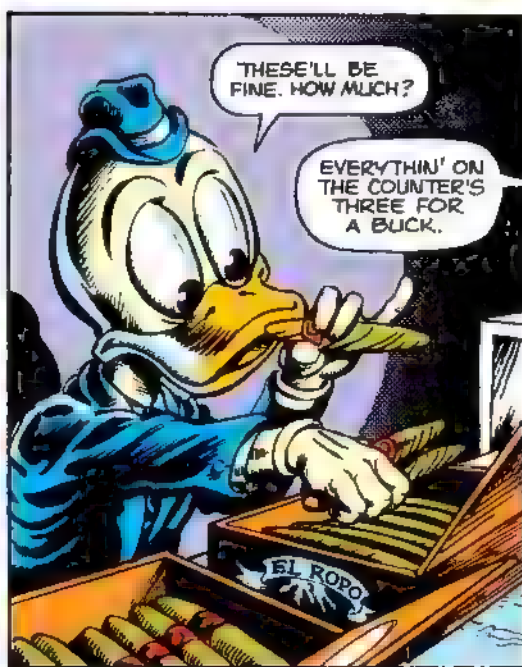
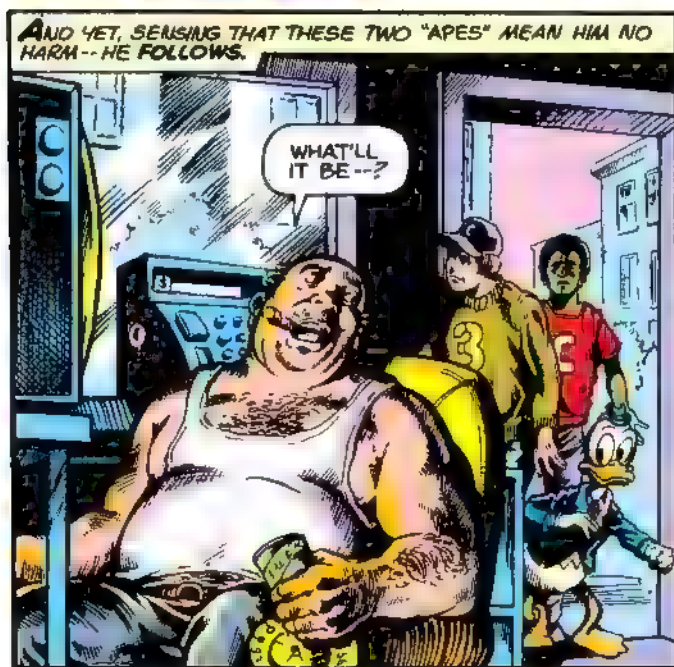


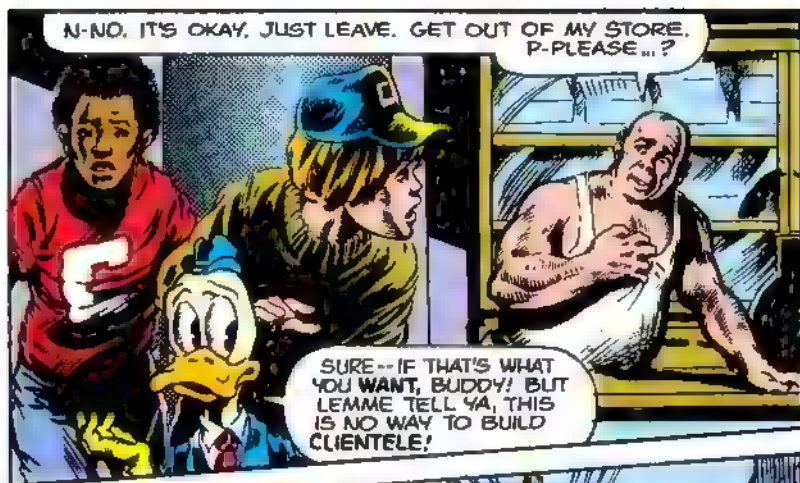
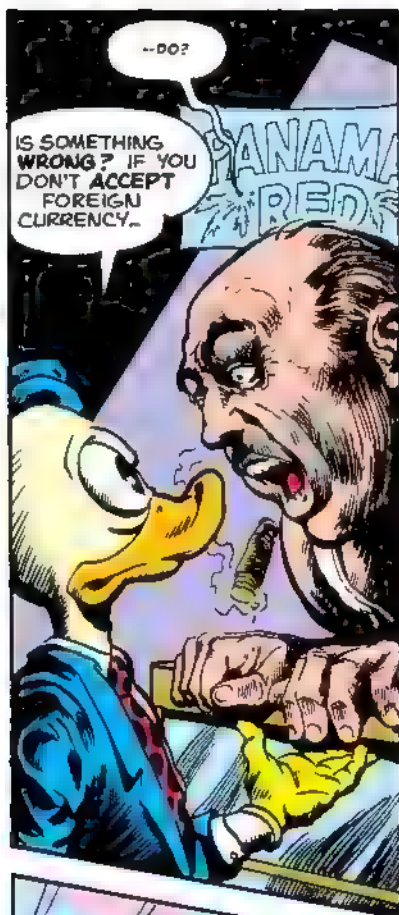
*IN FEAR #19 AND MAN-THING #1 -- LEN

IF YA REALLY
WANNA HELP--
YOU'LL SHUT UP
AN' POINT ME
TOWARD THE
NEAREST
CIGAR STORE.

I--IT'S RIGHT
AROUND THE
BLOCK. C'MON
WE'LL TAKE
YOU









YEAH, I CAN SEE WHY HE MAKES PEOPLE NERVOUS. IF HE EVER JUMPED--!

EVERYBODY HOPES HE WILL JUMP BUT HE JUST SITS THERE...

..BRINGIN' DOWN PROPERTY VALUES



Y'KNOW, JUICE, I COULD DRINK YOU RIGHT NOW AND SHOW ALL THOSE FOOLS. I COULD BE MASTER OF THE WORLD!

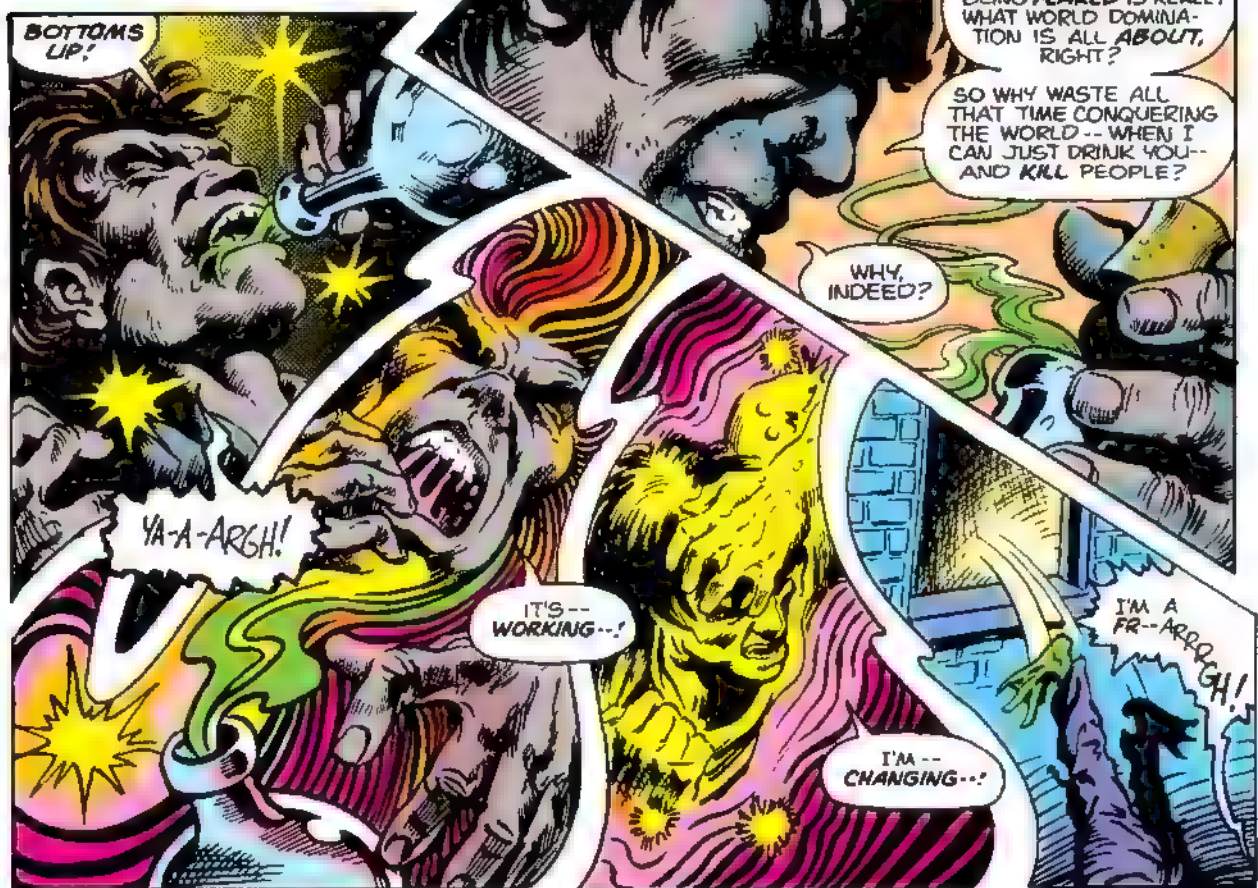
BUT I KEEP ASKING MYSELF WHY? WHY SHOULD I CONQUER THE WORLD?



I MEAN... ONCE I GOT THE WORLD, WHAT WOULD I DO WITH IT? THE ONLY THING POWER'S GOOD FOR... IS GETTING MORE POWER.

AND IF A MAN'S GOT ALL THE POWER-- ALL THAT'S LEFT FOR HIM IS TO USE IT.

TO GET RID OF HIS ENEMIES. TO KILL PEOPLE.



BOTTOMS UP!

YA-A-ARGH!

IT'S-- WORKING--!

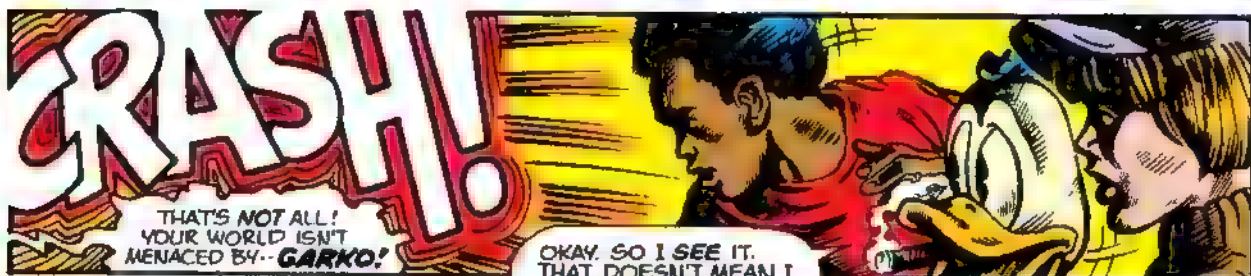
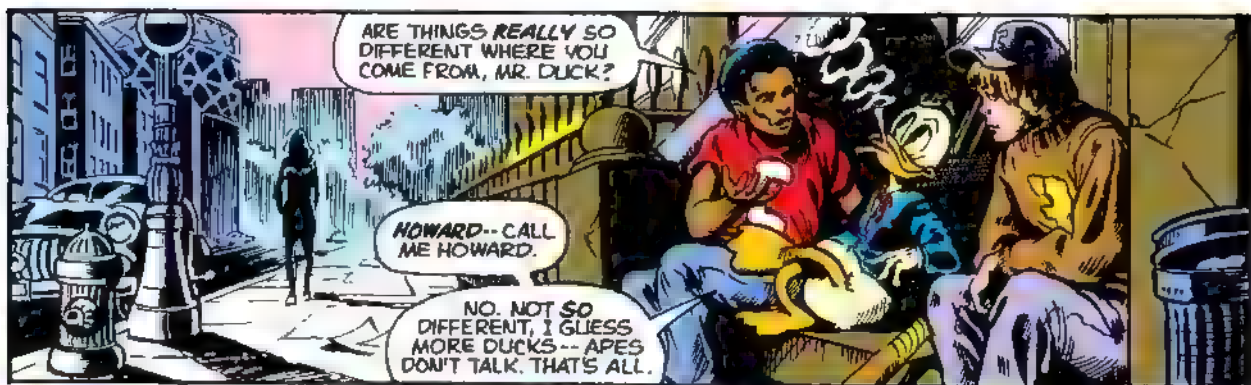
WHY, INDEED?

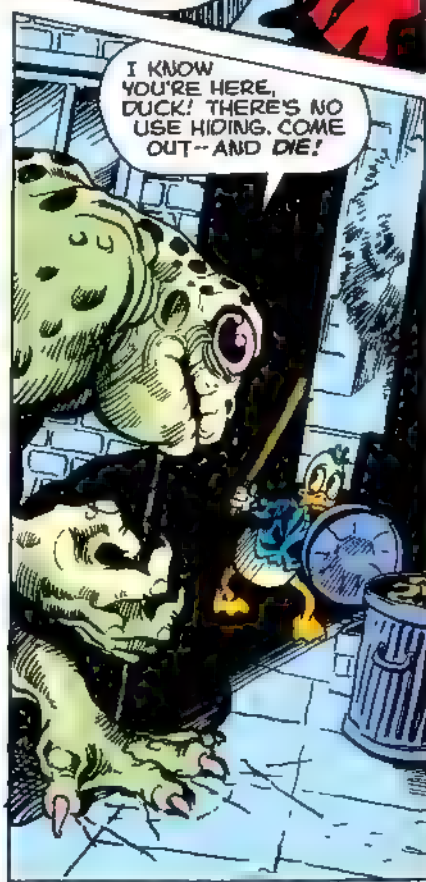
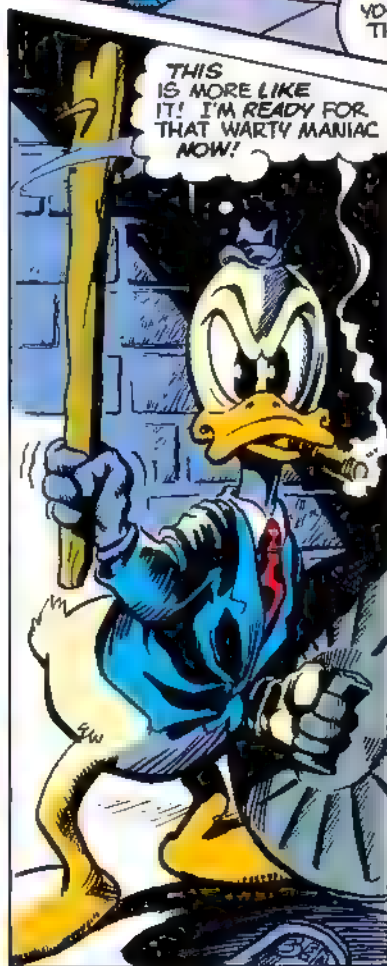
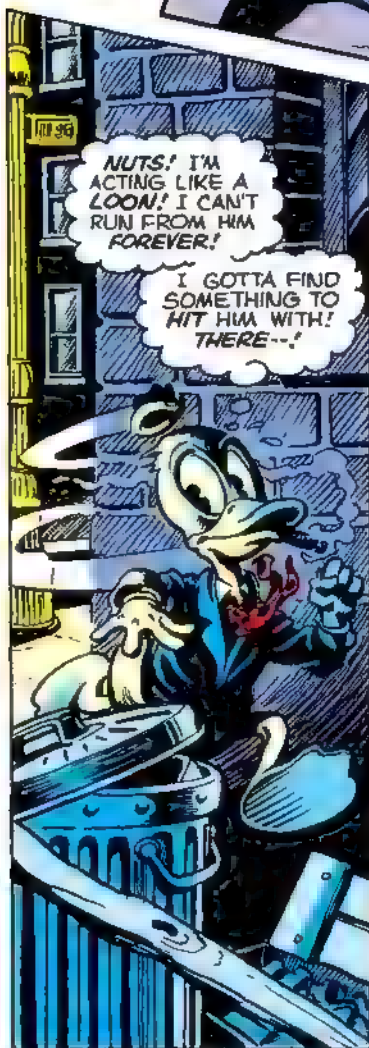
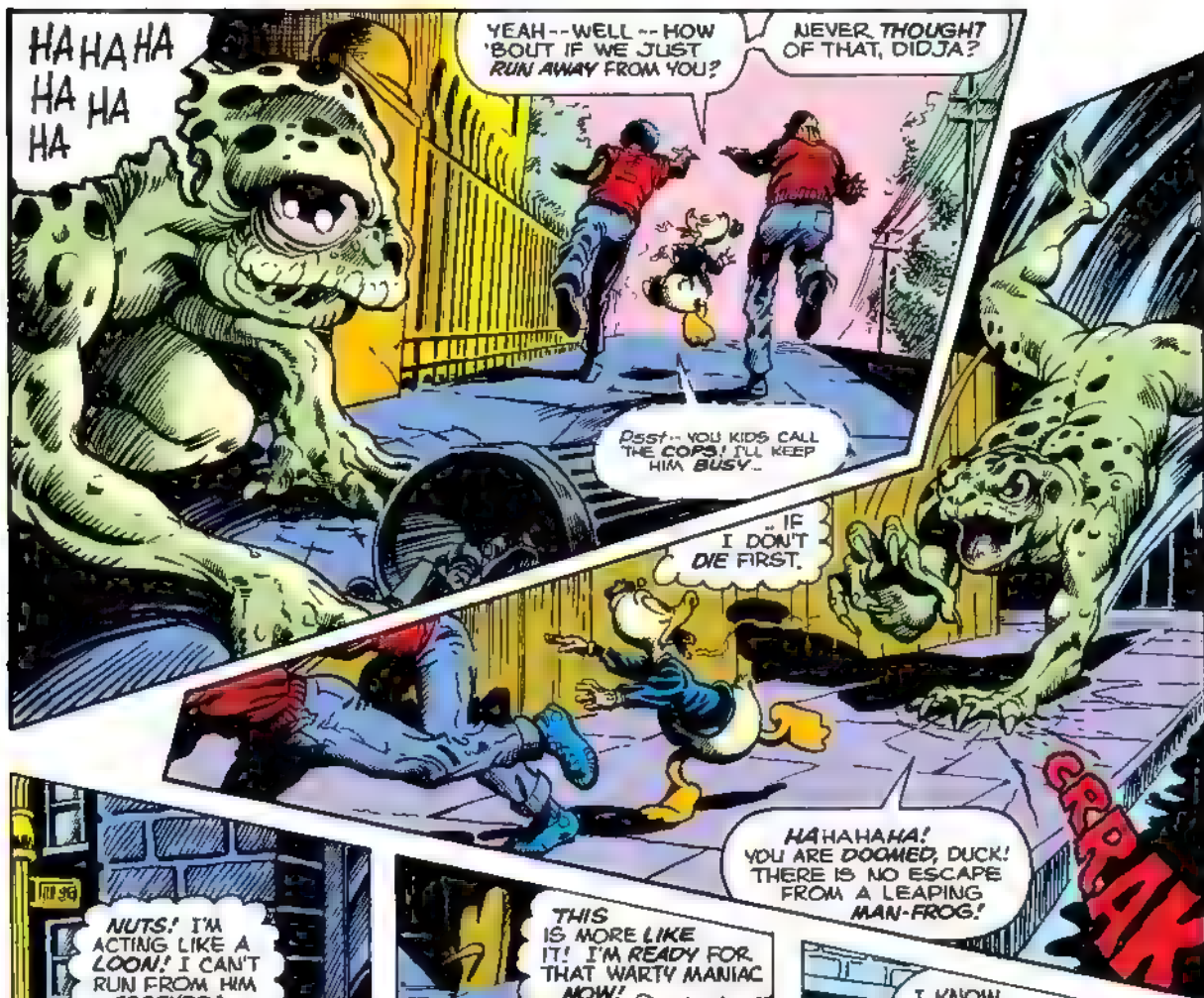
I'M-- CHANGING--!

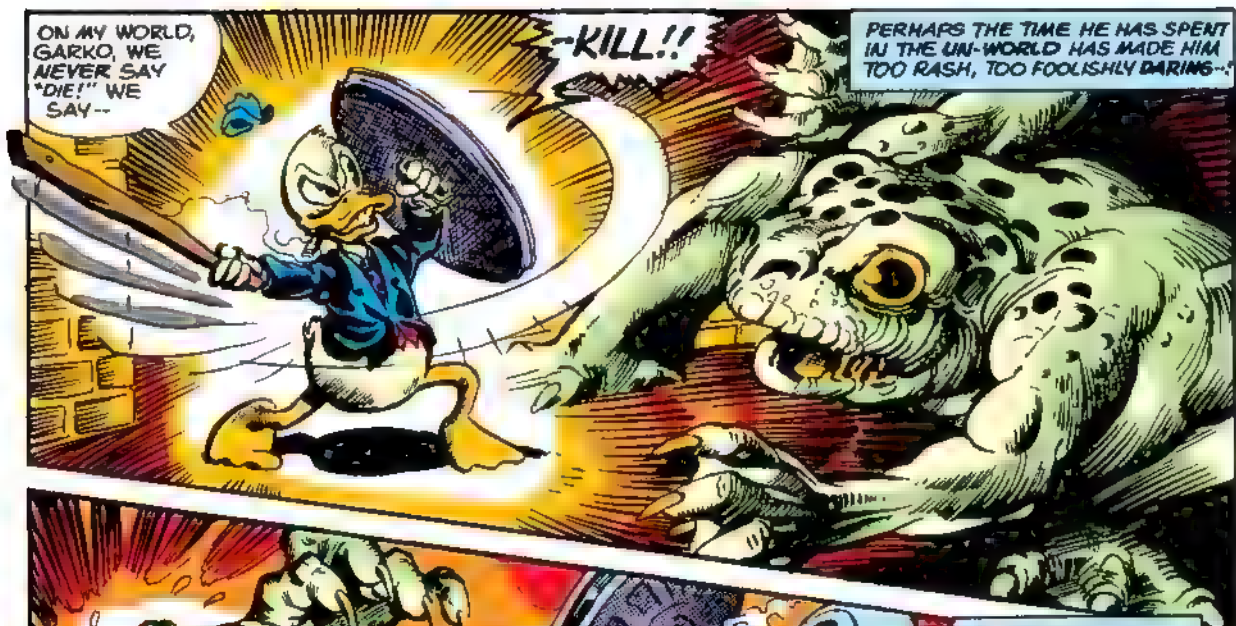
SO... KILLING PEOPLE, BEING FEARED IS REALLY WHAT WORLD DOMINATION IS ALL ABOUT, RIGHT?

SO WHY WASTE ALL THAT TIME CONQUERING THE WORLD-- WHEN I CAN JUST DRINK YOU-- AND KILL PEOPLE?

I'M A FR--ARGH!



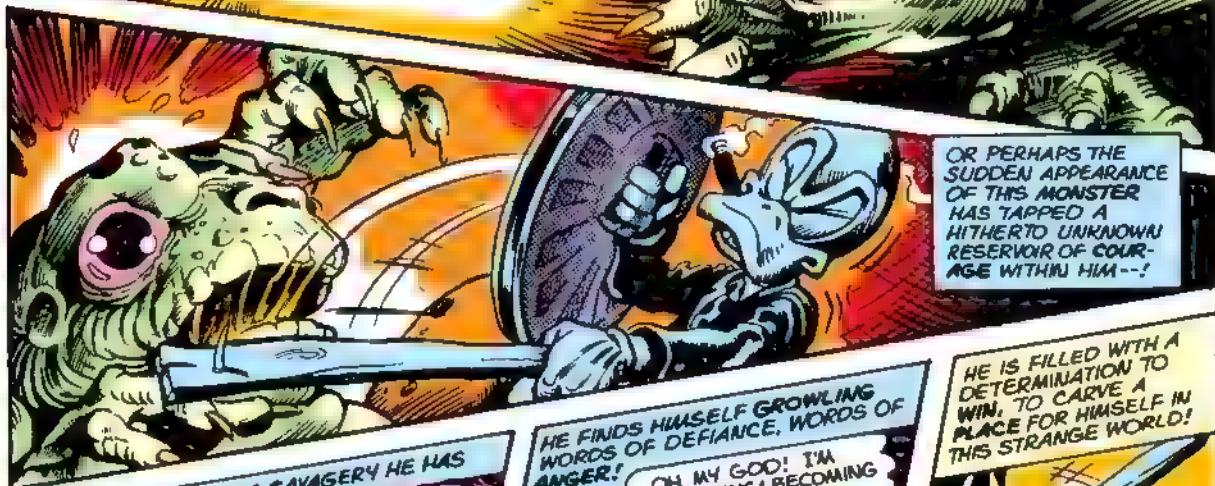




ON MY WORLD,
GARKO, WE
NEVER SAY
"DIE!" WE
SAY--

--KILL!!

PERHAPS THE TIME HE HAS SPENT
IN THE UN-WORLD HAS MADE HIM
TOO RASH, TOO FOOLISHLY DARING--!

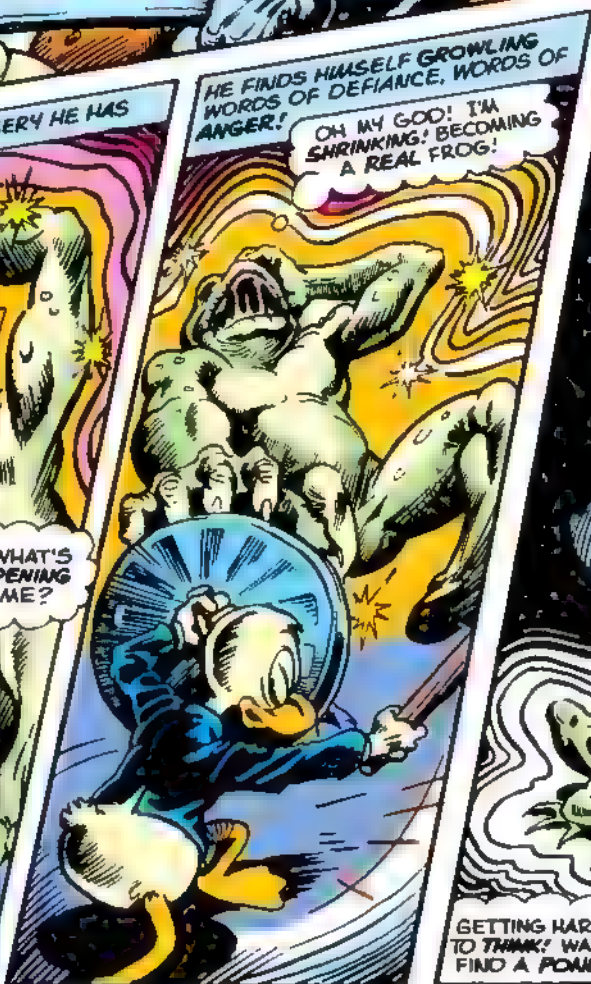


OR PERHAPS THE
SUDDEN APPEARANCE
OF THIS MONSTER
HAS TAPPED A
HITHERTO UNKNOWN
RESERVOIR OF COUR-
AGE WITHIN HIM--!



BUT HE FIGHTS WITH A SAVAGERY HE HAS
NEVER KNOWN BEFORE!

WH-WHAT'S
HAPPENING
TO ME?



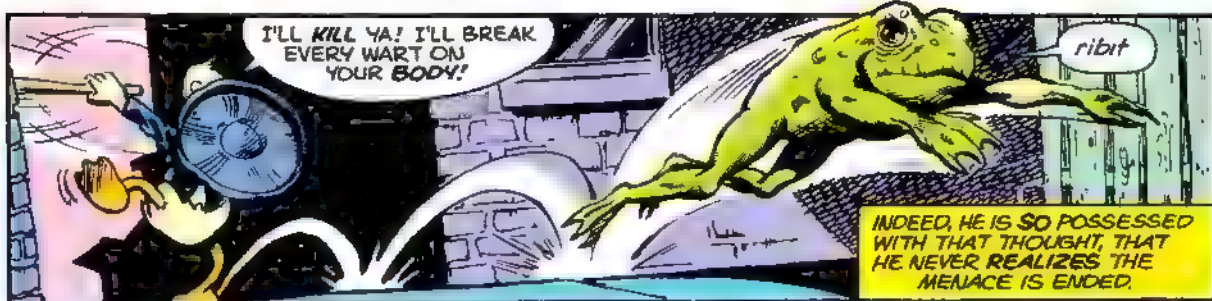
HE FINDS HIMSELF GROWLING
WORDS OF DEFIANCE, WORDS OF
ANGER!

OH MY GOD! I'M
SHRINKING! BECOMING
A REAL FROG!



HE IS FILLED WITH A
DETERMINATION TO
WIN, TO CARVE A
PLACE FOR HIMSELF IN
THIS STRANGE WORLD!

GETTING HARDER
TO THINK! WANNA
FIND A POND!





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68 BIG PAGES

GIANT-SIZE MAN-THING

ALL-NEW!

THREE FACES OF FEAR!

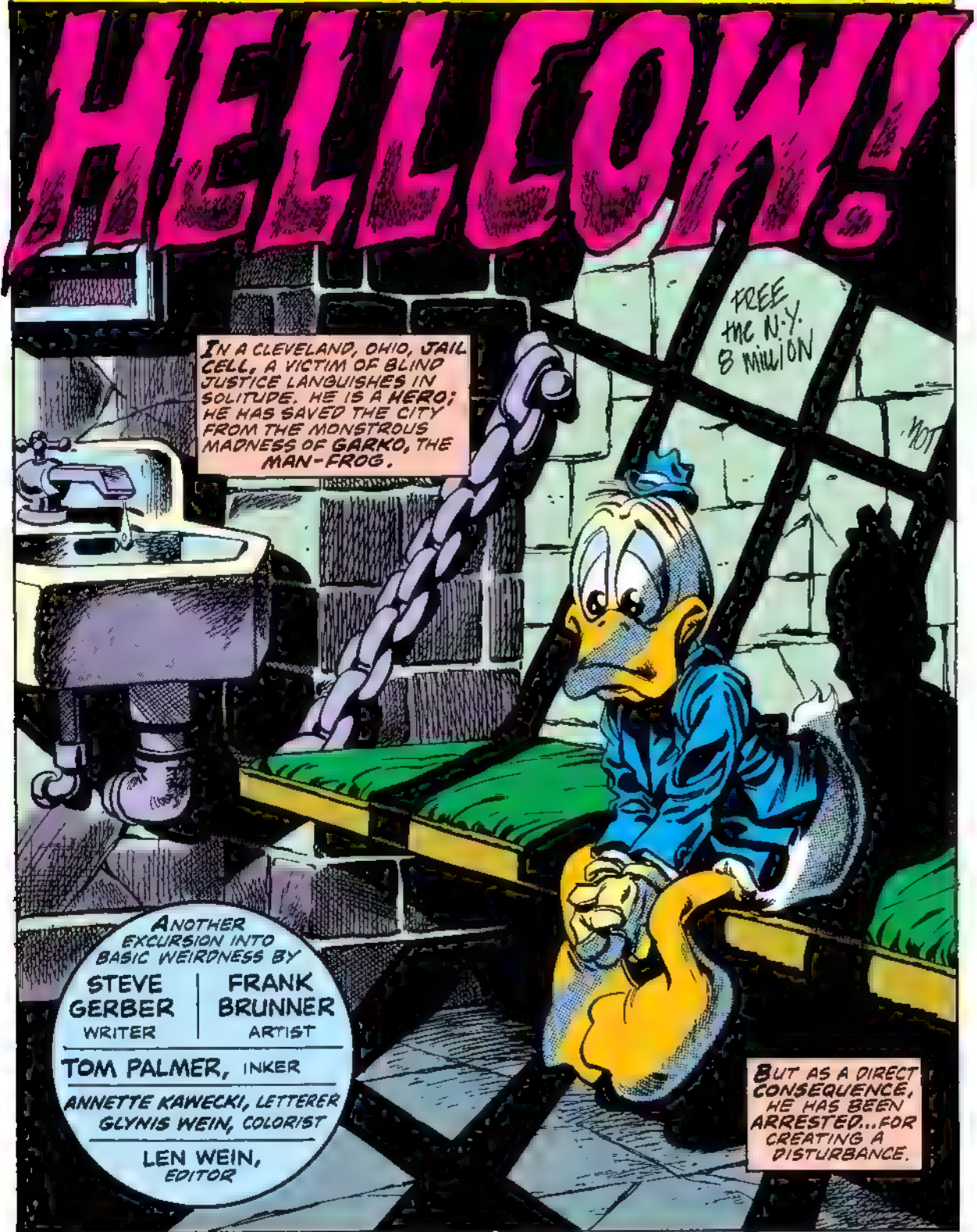
MACABRE
DOUBLE-LENGTH
MIND-BENDERS
IN THE MYSTERIOUS
MARVEL
MANNER!

EXTRA!

HOWARD THE DUCK
BATTLES FOR HIS LIFE
AGAINST THE MOST INCREDIBLE
VAMPIRE OF ALL!

From the time of his hatching, he was...different. A potentially brilliant scholar who dreaded the structured environment of school, he educated himself in the streets, taking whatever work was available, formulating his philosophy of self from what he learned of the world about him. And then the Cosmic Axis shifted...and that world *changed*. Suddenly, he was stranded in a universe he could not fathom. Without warning, he became a strange fowl in an even stranger land.

Stan Lee PRESENTS: HOWARD THE DUCK!™



IN A CLEVELAND, OHIO, JAIL CELL, A VICTIM OF BLIND JUSTICE LANGUISES IN SOLITUDE. HE IS A HERO; HE HAS SAVED THE CITY FROM THE MONSTROUS MADNESS OF GARKO, THE MAN-FROG.

ANOTHER
EXCURSION INTO
BASIC WEIRDNESS BY

STEVE
GERBER
WRITER

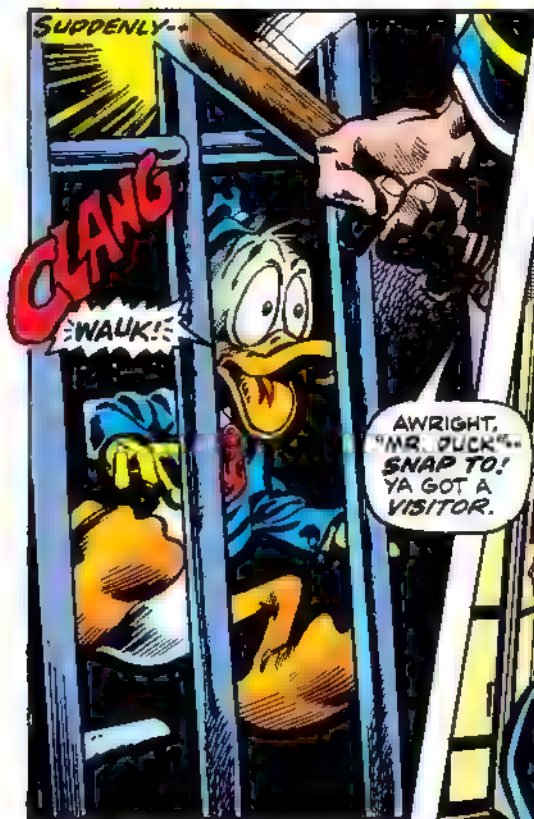
FRANK
BRUNNER
ARTIST

TOM PALMER, INKER

ANNETTE KAWECKI, LETTERER
GLYNIS WEIN, COLORIST

LEN WEIN,
EDITOR

BUT AS A DIRECT
CONSEQUENCE,
HE HAS BEEN
ARRESTED...FOR
CREATING A
DISTURBANCE.



SUPDENSELY...

CLANG
WAAK!

AWRIGHT,
"MR. DUCK"
SNAP TO!
YA GOT A
VISITOR.

I DON'T BELIEVE IT. THIS IS THE PRISONER
WHO'S STUMPED OUR BEST INVESTIGATORS--
THIS MIDGET IN A DUCK SUIT?!

YESSIR,
COMMISSIONER
GORDONSKI.
WE FIGURED
YOU'D WANT
A LOOK
AT 'IM.

YOU FIGURED I'D
LIKE TO
LOOK AT A
DUCK SUIT,
EH? I DON'T
KNOW WHETHER
TO LAUGH--
OR PUNCH YOU
IN THE MOUTH!

I PRESUME
YOU'VE AT
LEAST
GOTTEN HIS
FINGER-
PRINTS...?

OBOY.

TH- THEY WOULDN'T TAKE
THROUGH THE FEATHERS...

...SIR?

SHUT UP! AND YOU--
WHOEVER YOU ARE--
TAKE OFF ALL YOUR
CLOTHES--NOW!

OR WE'LL
ADD OB-
STRUCTION
OF JUSTICE
TO THE
CHARGE
AGAINST
YOU.

OKAY...
IF YOU
SAY SO...

BUT I REALLY
DON'T SEE HOW
IT'S GONNA
HELP... TO
EMBARRASS
ME...

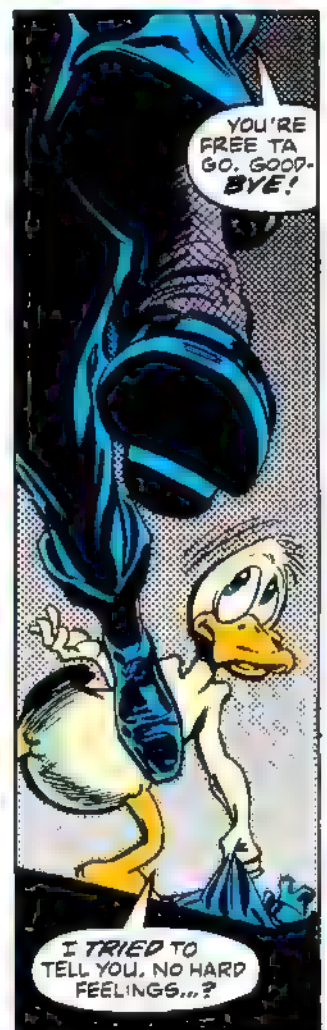
SEE,
IT ALL
BEGAN
WTH
THIS
FROG,
AN'--

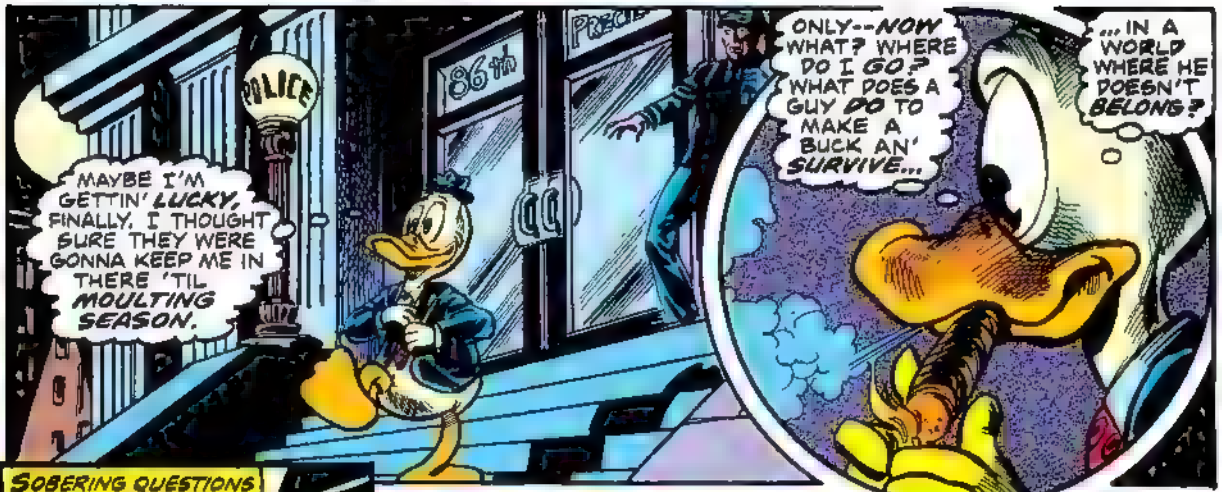
W-WE
TRIED,
SIR...

I SAID ALL YOUR CLOTHES!!

OKAY,
OKAY...
HERE...
TAKE IT!
BUT I'M
TELLIN'
YOU...

THAT
DOES
IT!





AND THEN, HER THIRST SATIATED, THE COWLED COW UNDERGOES A WEIRD TRANSFORMATION.

HER BILLINGING CAPE BECOMES LEATHERN WINGS...

...THE WINGS OF A VAMPIRE BAT!

DADDY? DADDY, WHAT'S--?

OH, NO-- NO! STAY BACK-- DON'T--

HAHAHAMOOO

...WHERE, THE FOLLOWING EVENING...

THE STRANGE CREATURE SAILS OVER THE GIRL'S HEAD...INTO THE NIGHT...TOWARD CLEVELAND...

NO PLAIN DEALS
5TH MYSTERY FARM DEATH

THE KILLER'S NOT ONE OF THE HAIRLESS APES--IT'S A FARM ANIMAL--A CHICKEN, MAYBE.

I NEVER DID TRUST CHICKENS.

BUT THE COPS HERE WOULD NEVER THINK OF THAT.

HEY! WHAT IF I CAUGHT THE KILLER!? MAYBE I COULD GET A JOB WITH THE COPS, AN'...

NUTS! IT AIN'T NO MYSTERY TO ME!

I'LL DO IT!

HOWARD SPENDS THAT NIGHT AND THE NEXT DAY IN THE PARK, CONCEIVING A DARING PLAN...A SCHEME THAT WILL COME TO FRUITION THIS NIGHT... FOR NOW THE BOVINE BLOOD-BEAST STALKS THE CITY!

VENGEANCE FOR A LIFE STOLEN AWAY FROM HER MORE THAN 300 YEARS AGO, A PEACEFUL EXISTENCE IN THE PLENTIFUL PASTURES OF SWITZERLAND...

AND SHE HAS COME SEEKING VENGEANCE!

...AS THE FAVORITE COW OF OLD HANS.

BUT LATE ONE NIGHT, WHILE HANS SLEPT, A DESPERATE STRANGER CAME TO THE LITTLE FARM.

AND THE STRANGER WAS VERY THIRSTY.

...AND NOT FOR MILK.

ALL THE DOORS AND WINDOWS OF THE VILLAGE WERE LOCKED.

HANS COULD NOT BEAR TO EAT HER BLOOD-LESS CORPSE. SHE HAD BEEN...TOO CLOSE TO HIS HEART FOR THAT.

TEARFULLY, HE COMMITTED HER BODY TO THE EARTH AND SAID A QUIET PRAYER...

...NEVER GUESSING...

...THAT THREE NIGHTS LATER...

...BESSIE WOULD RISE FROM HER GRAVE...UNDEAD!

FOR THREE CENTURIES NOW SHE HAS PURSUED THE STRANGER, ALWAYS ONE STEP BEHIND. AND TONIGHT THE SEARCH GOES ON.



TWO A.M.: CLEVELAND SLEEPS... SAVE FOR ONE LONE FIGURE.

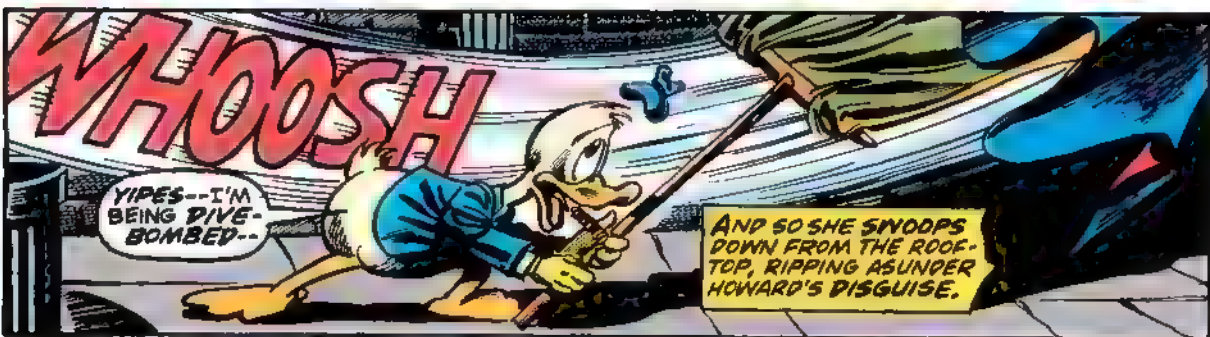


IF THE KILLER'S AROUND, IT'LL HAVE TO GO FOR ME. THERE'S NOBODY ELSE ON THE STREETS!

COULD THIS BE THE STRANGER, SHE WONDERS? HE MIGHT HAVE CHANGED CLOTHES AFTER ALL THIS TIME.



SHE MUST INVESTIGATE.



YIPES--I'M BEING DIVE-BOMBED--

AND SO SHE SNOOPS DOWN FROM THE ROOFTOP, RIPPING ASUNDER HOWARD'S DISGUISE.

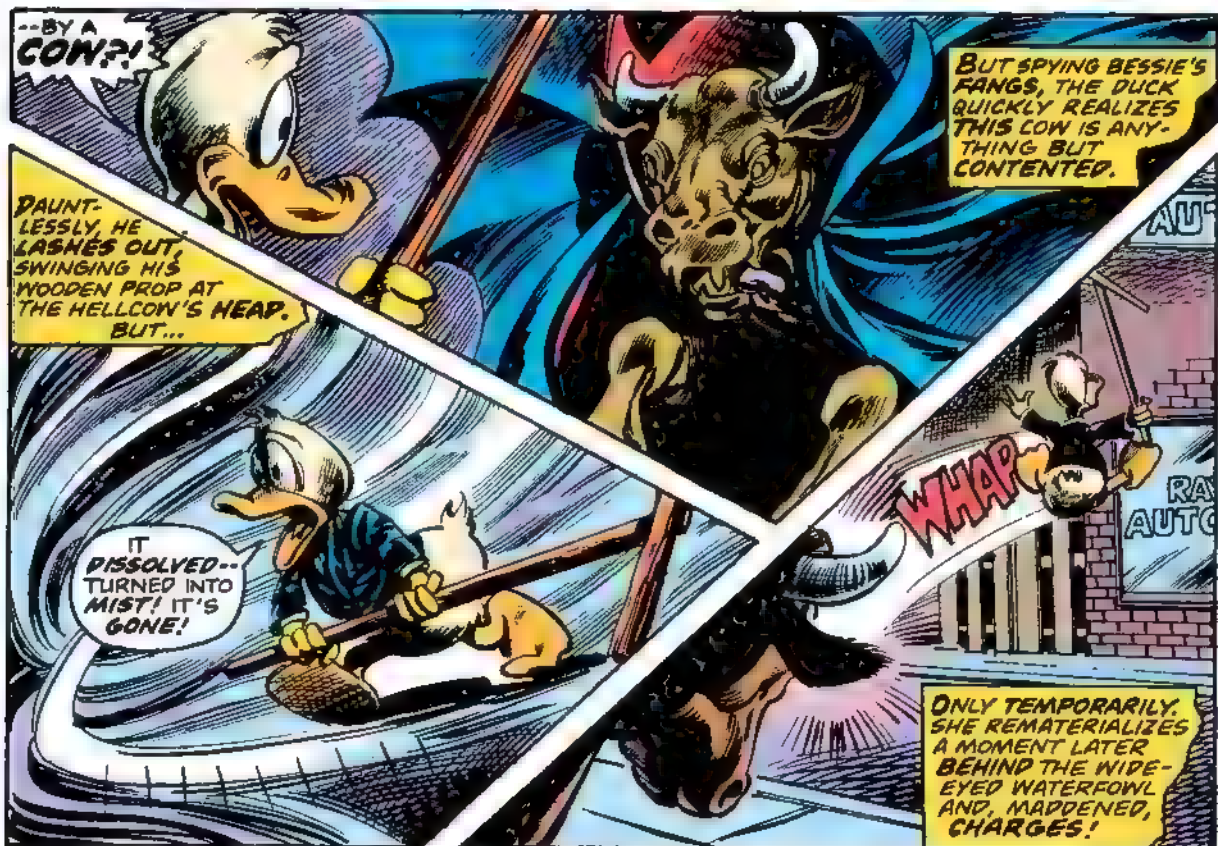
--BY A COW?!

DAUNTLESSLY, HE LASHES OUT, SWINGING HIS WOODEN PROP AT THE HELLCOW'S HEAP. BUT...

IT DISSOLVED--TURNED INTO MIST! IT'S GONE!

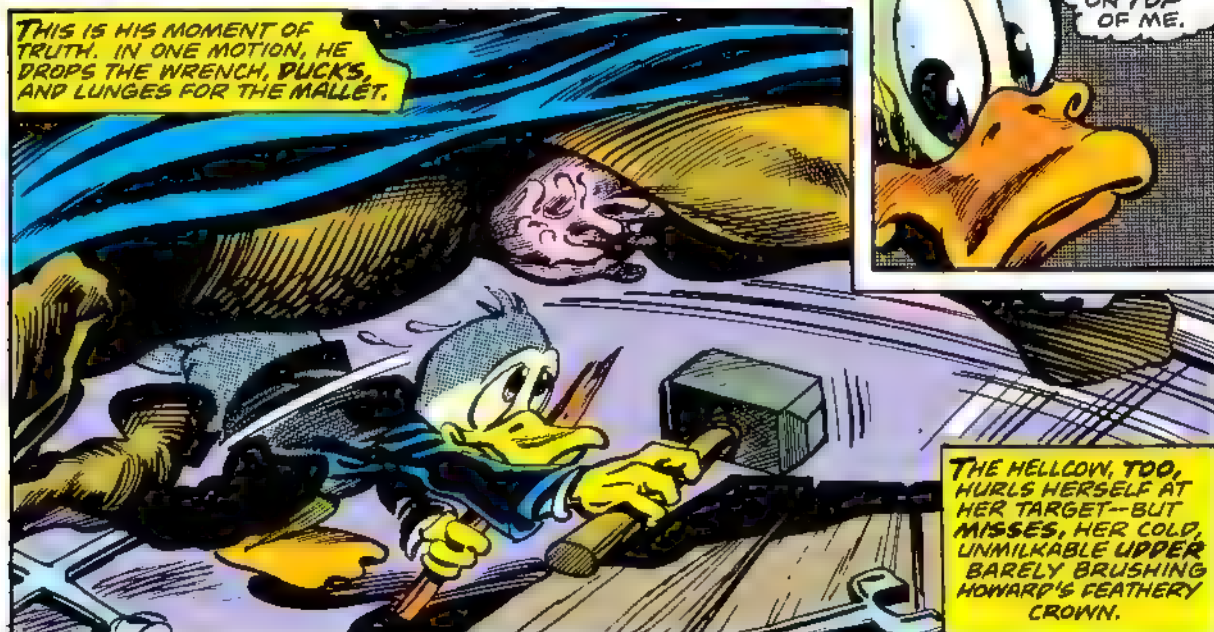
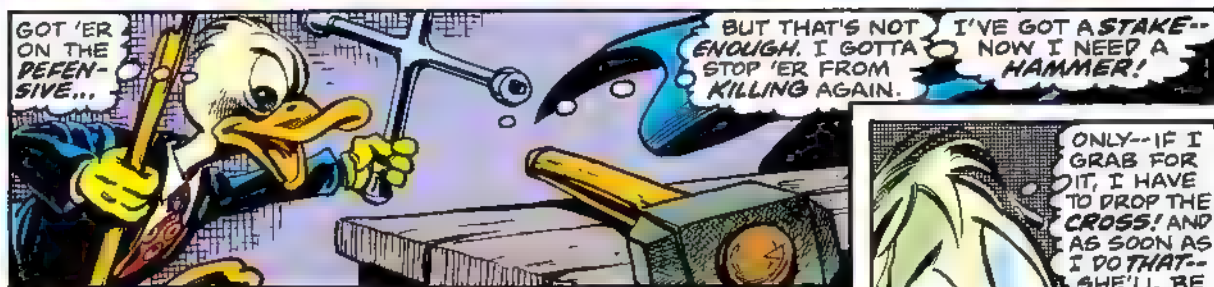
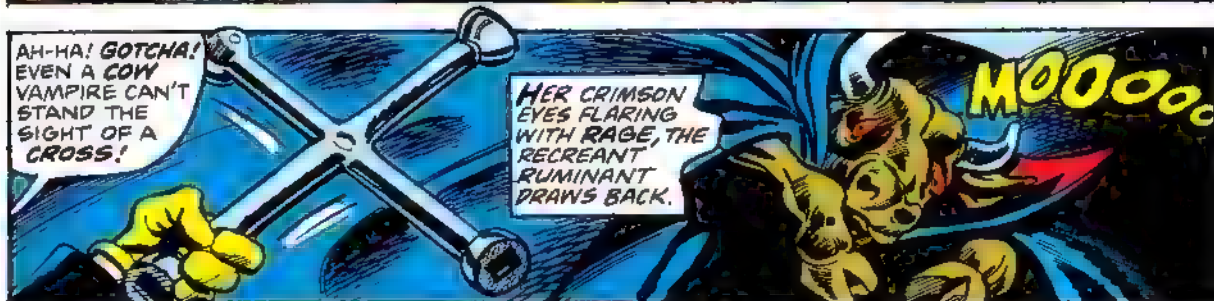
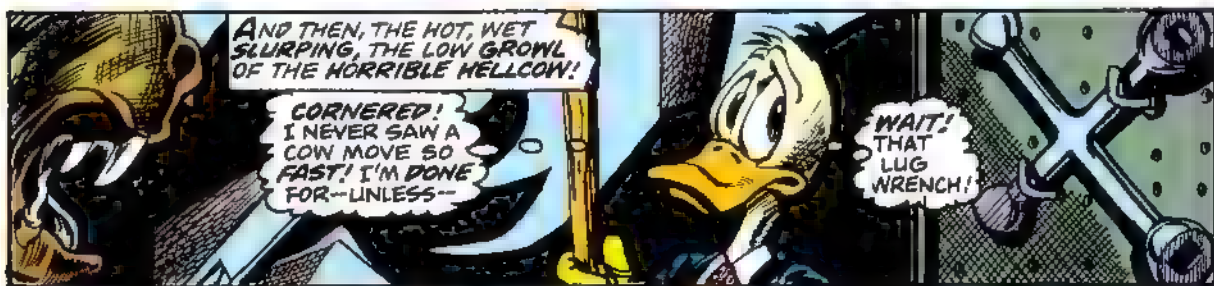
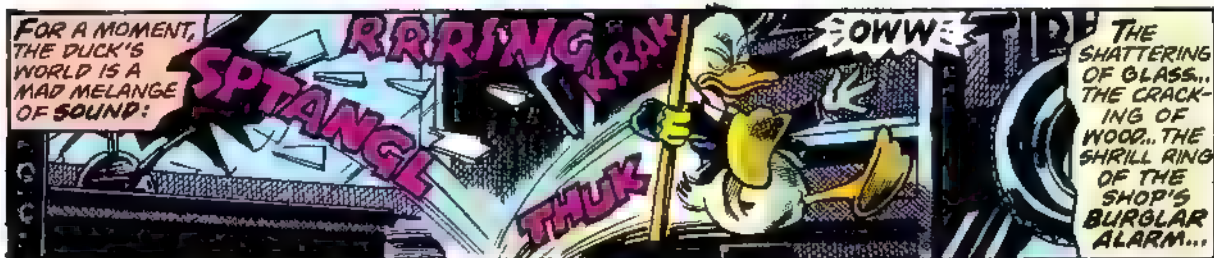
BUT SPYING BESSIE'S FANGS, THE DUCK QUICKLY REALIZES THIS COW IS ANYTHING BUT CONTENTED.

ONLY TEMPORARILY. SHE REMATERIALIZES A MOMENT LATER BEHIND THE WIDE-EYED WATERFOWL AND, MADDENED, CHARGES!



WHAP!

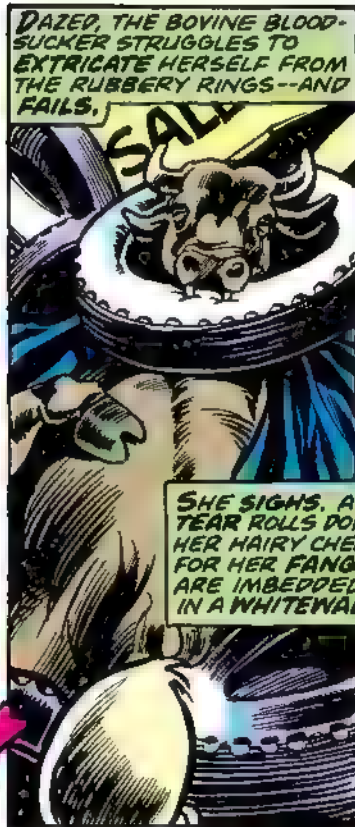
RAY AUTO





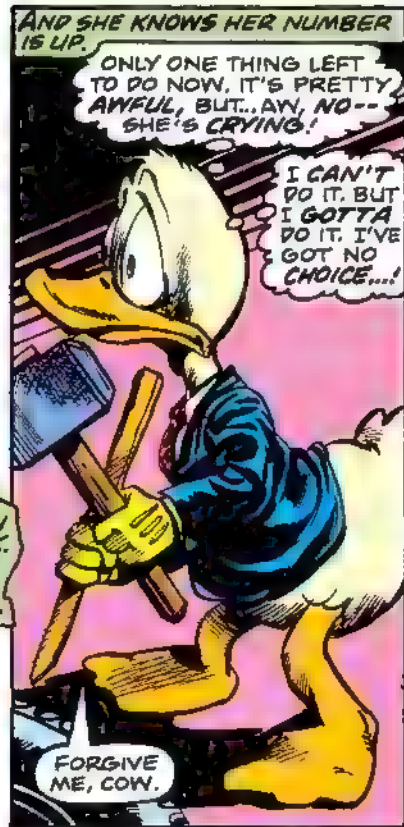
AND, HOOVES FLAILING OUT OF CONTROL, SHE COMES TO A LOUD, UNGRACEFUL LANDING...

...AMID A PILE OF STEEL-BELTED RADIAL RETREADS.



DAZED, THE BOVINE BLOOD-SUCKER STRUGGLES TO EXTRICATE HERSELF FROM THE RUBBERY RINGS--AND FAILS.

SHE SIGHS. A TEAR ROLLS DOWN HER HAIRY CHEEK. FOR HER FANGS ARE IMBEDDED IN A WHITEWALL.

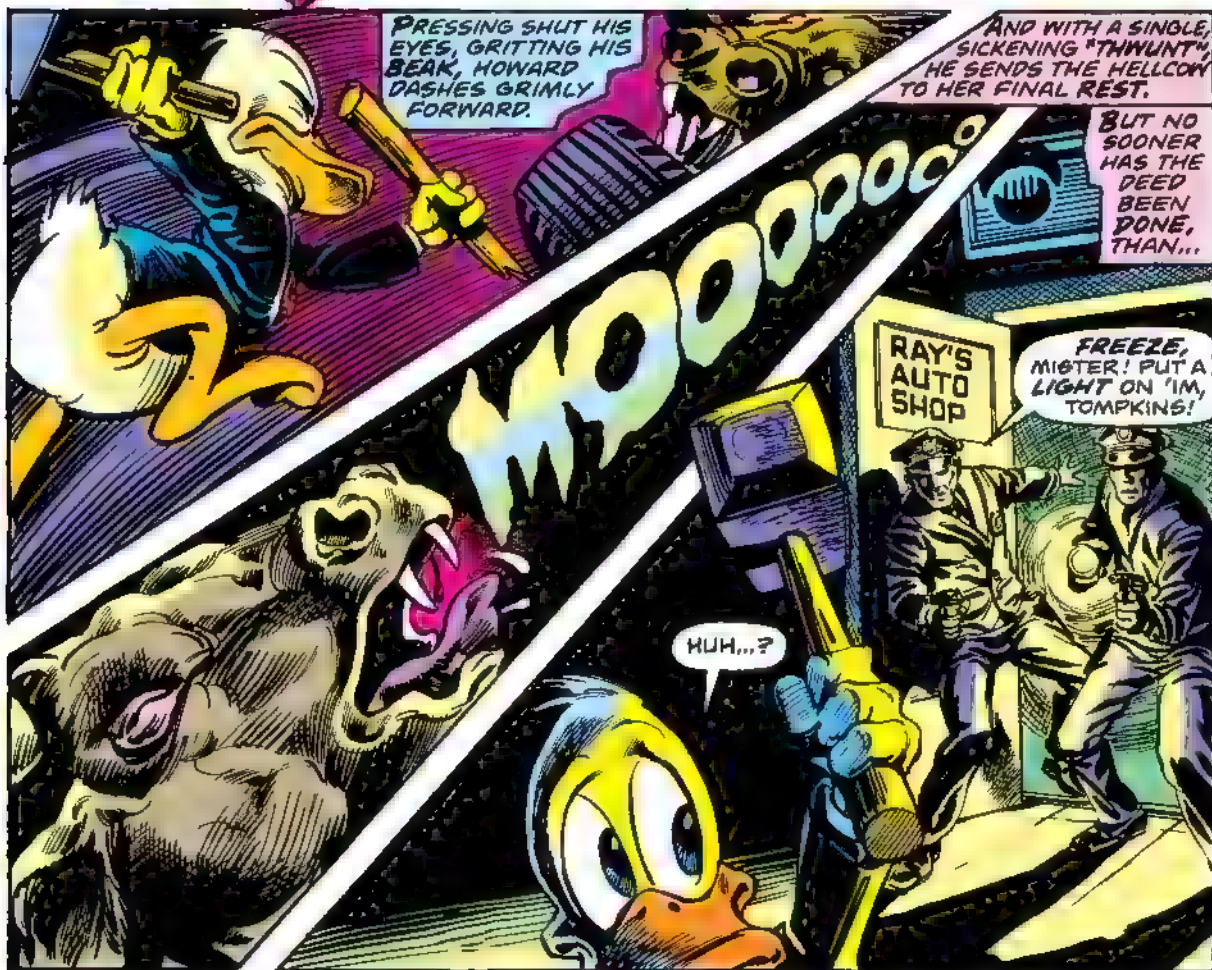


AND SHE KNOWS HER NUMBER IS UP.

ONLY ONE THING LEFT TO DO NOW. IT'S PRETTY AWFUL, BUT...AY, NO-- SHE'S CRYING!

I CAN'T DO IT. BUT I GOTTA DO IT. I'VE GOT NO CHOICE...!

FORGIVE ME, COW.



PRESSING SHUT HIS EYES, GRITTING HIS BEAK, HOWARD DASHES GRIMLY FORWARD.

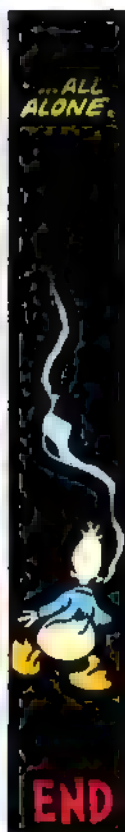
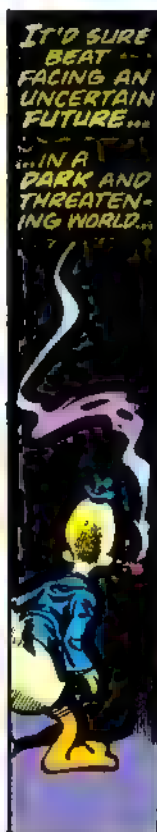
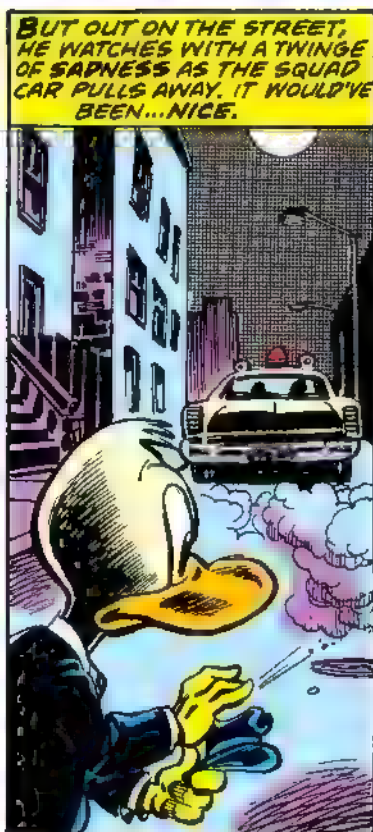
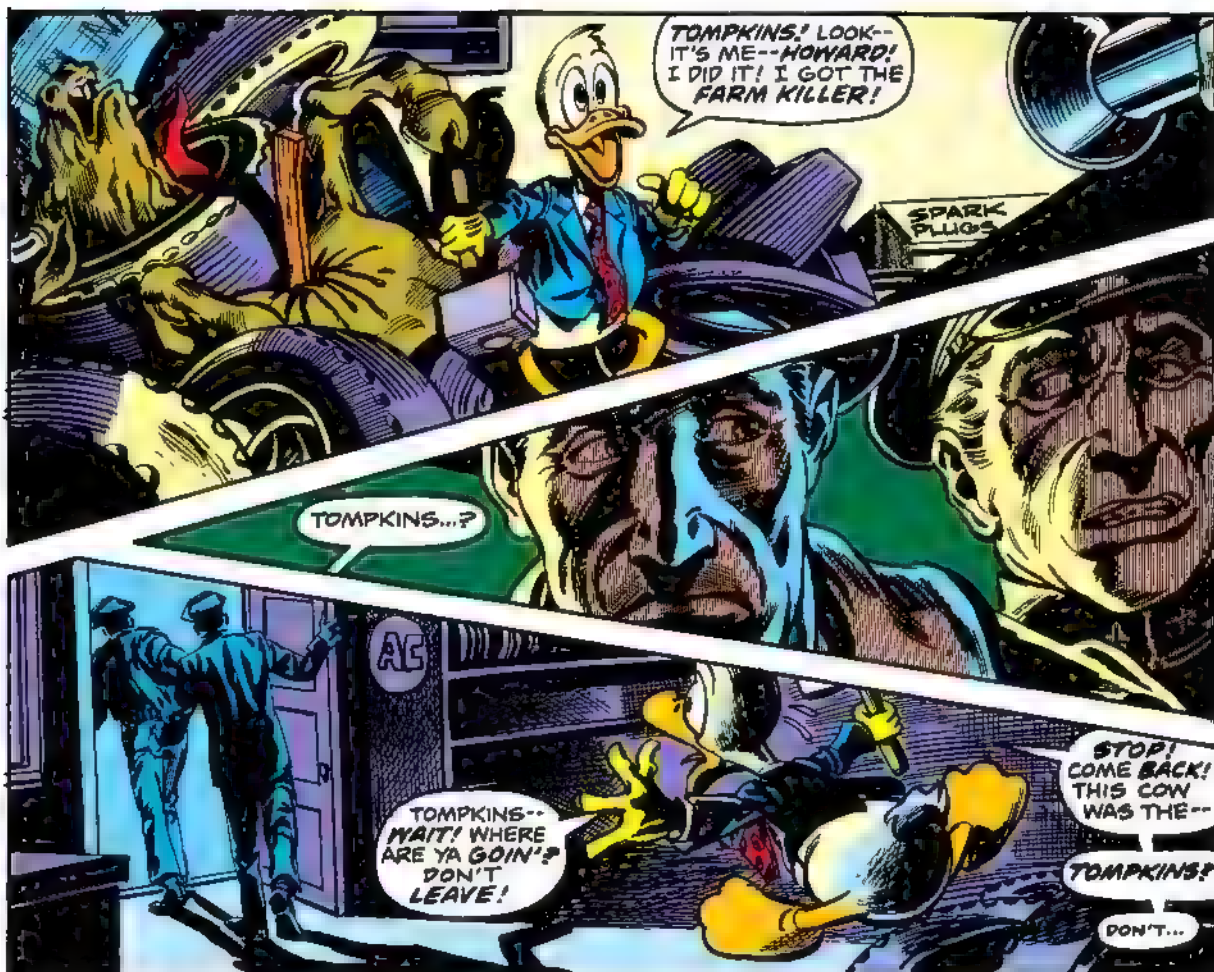
AND WITH A SINGLE, SICKENING "THWUNT" HE SENDS THE HELLCOW TO HER FINAL REST.

BUT NO SOONER HAS THE DEED BEEN DONE, THAN...

RAY'S AUTO SHOP

FREEZE, MISTER! PUT A LIGHT ON 'IM, TOMPKINS!

HUH...?



HOWARD
THE DUCK

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AGAINST SWORD AND SORCERY,
HOWARD STANDS SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH
THE AMAZING
SPIDER-MAN!

Stan Lee
PRESENTS:

HOWARD THE DUCK!

CREATED & WRITTEN BY
STEVE GERBER

ILLUSTRATED & COLORED BY
FRANK BRUNNER
CO-PLOTTERS

INKED BY
STEVE LEIALOHA

JOHN COSTANZA, letterer
MARV WOLFGMAN, Editor

BEHOLD: A
DEPRESSED
DUCK.

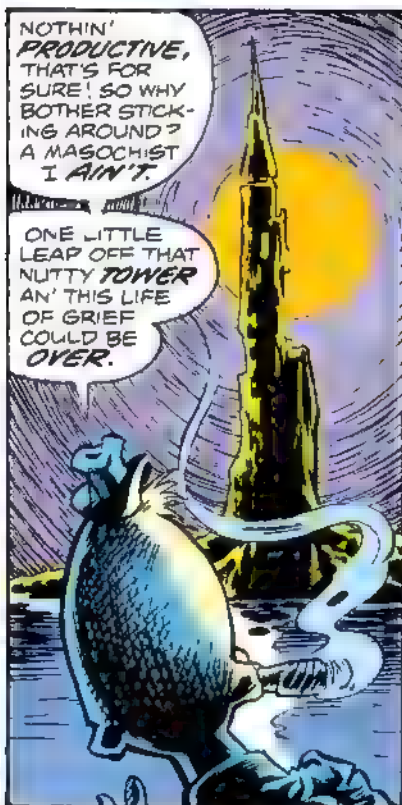
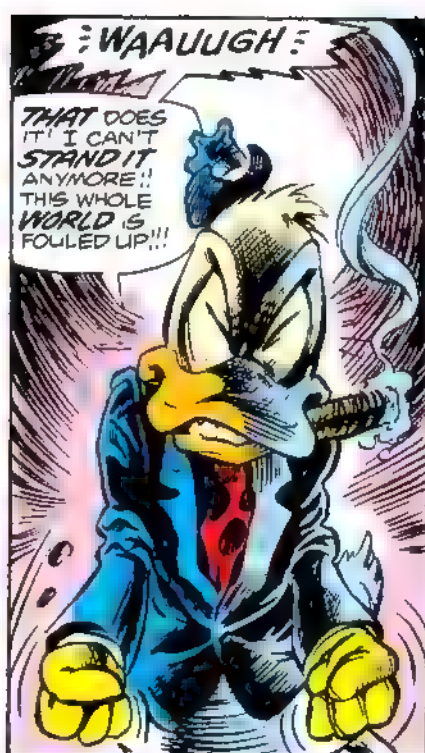
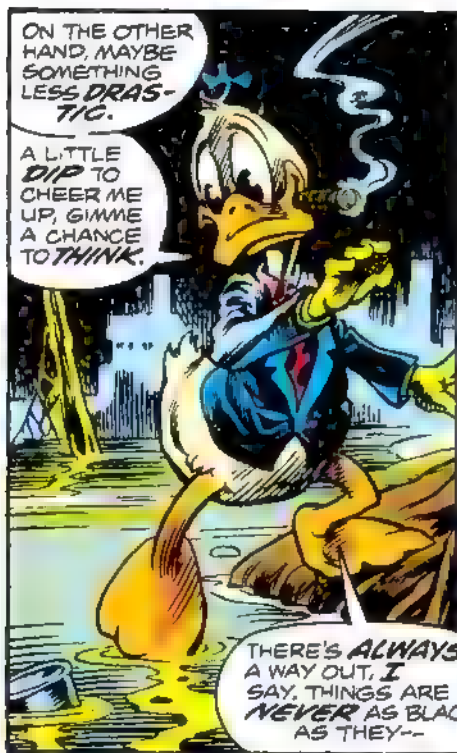
TWICE HE HAS SAVED
THE CITY OF CLEVELAND--
FIRST FROM THE WARTY
MENACE OF THE MAN-
FROG, THEN FROM THE
FANGS OF THE HORRIBLE
HELLCOW.

AND WHAT THANKS
DID HE GET? JAIL.
THE FIRST TIME,
BENIGN NEGLECT,
THE SECOND.

NOW HOMELESS,
PENNYLESS, HE
STANDS ON THE
BANK OF THE
CUYAHOGA
RIVER, CON-
TEMPLATING...

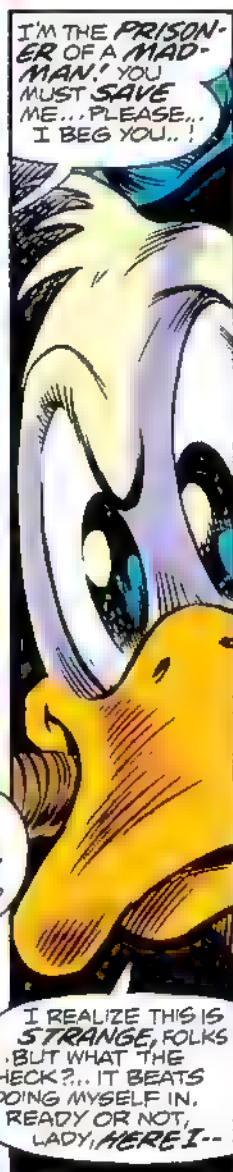
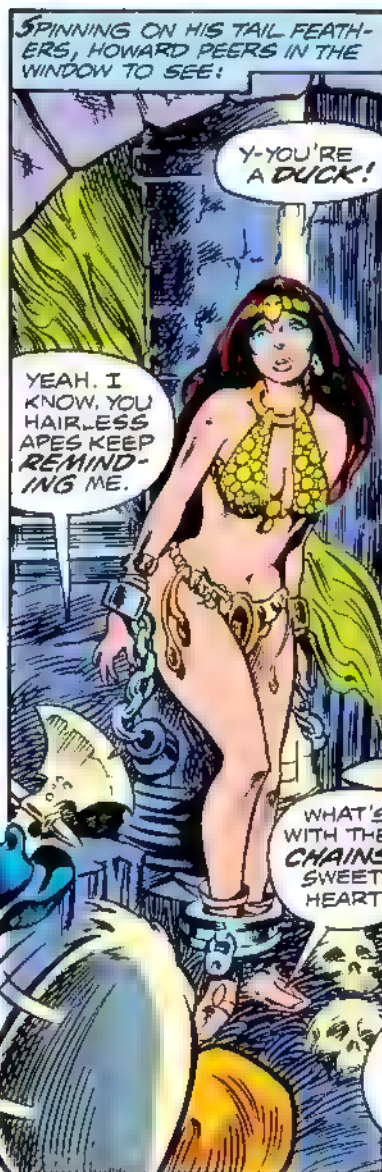
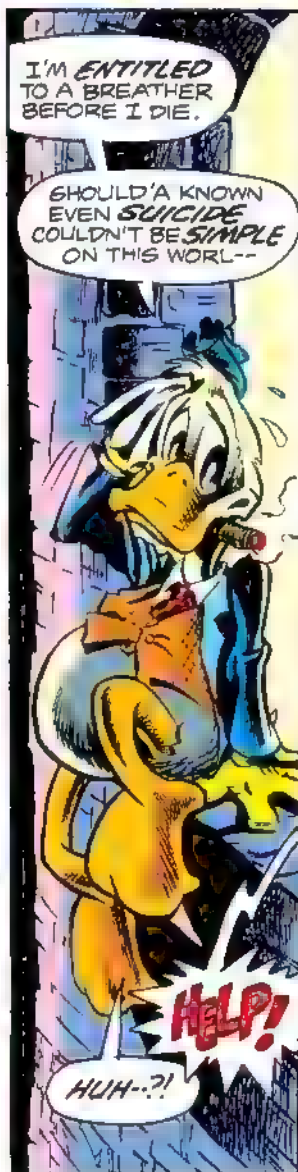
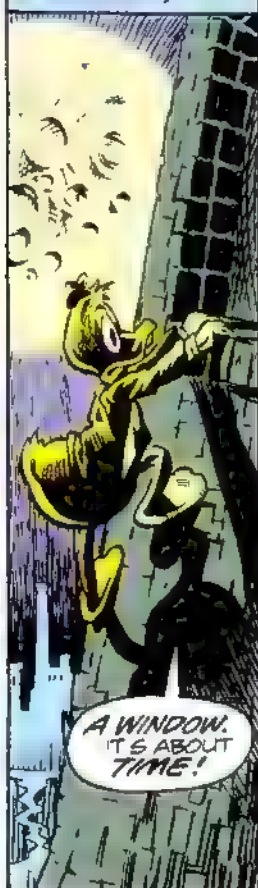
--SUICIDE?
YEAH, WELL.
MAYBE.

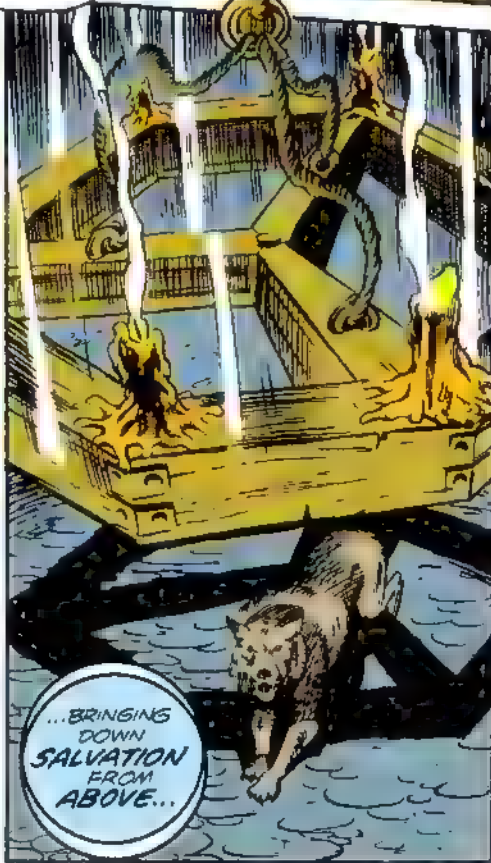
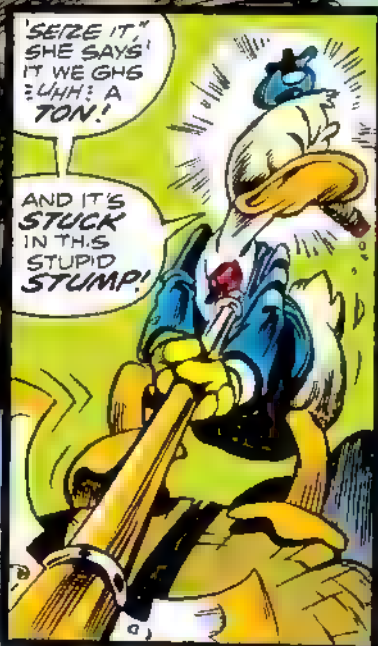
HOWARD THE BARBARIAN

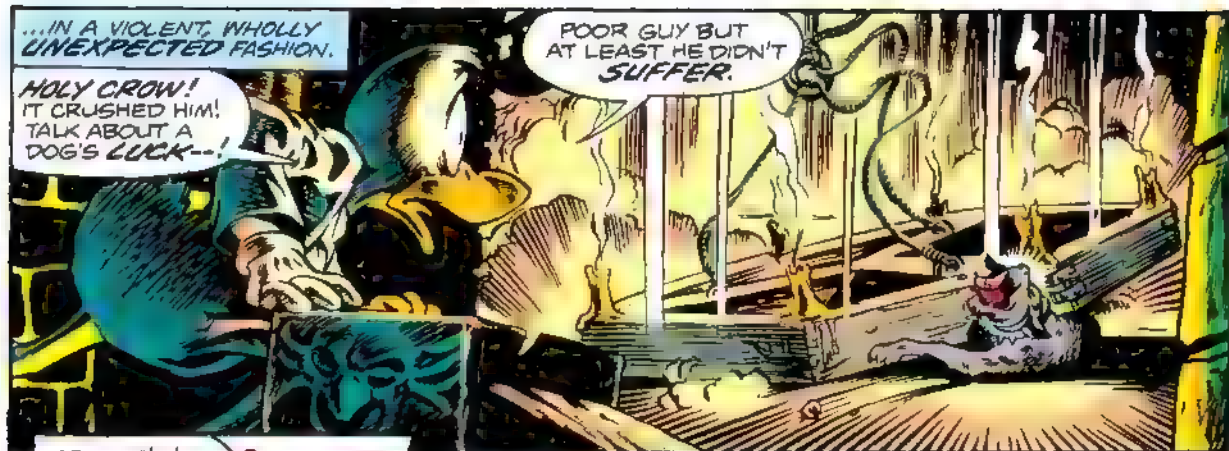




THE ASCENT IS SLOW, ARDUOUS. HOWARD'S WEBBED FEET PROVIDE NO TRACTION AGAINST THE SMOOTH SYNTHETIC SURFACE MORE THAN ONCE HE SLIPS... AND NEARLY RUSHES HIS DATE WITH DESTINY. BUT THE DUCK PERSEVERES, AND...



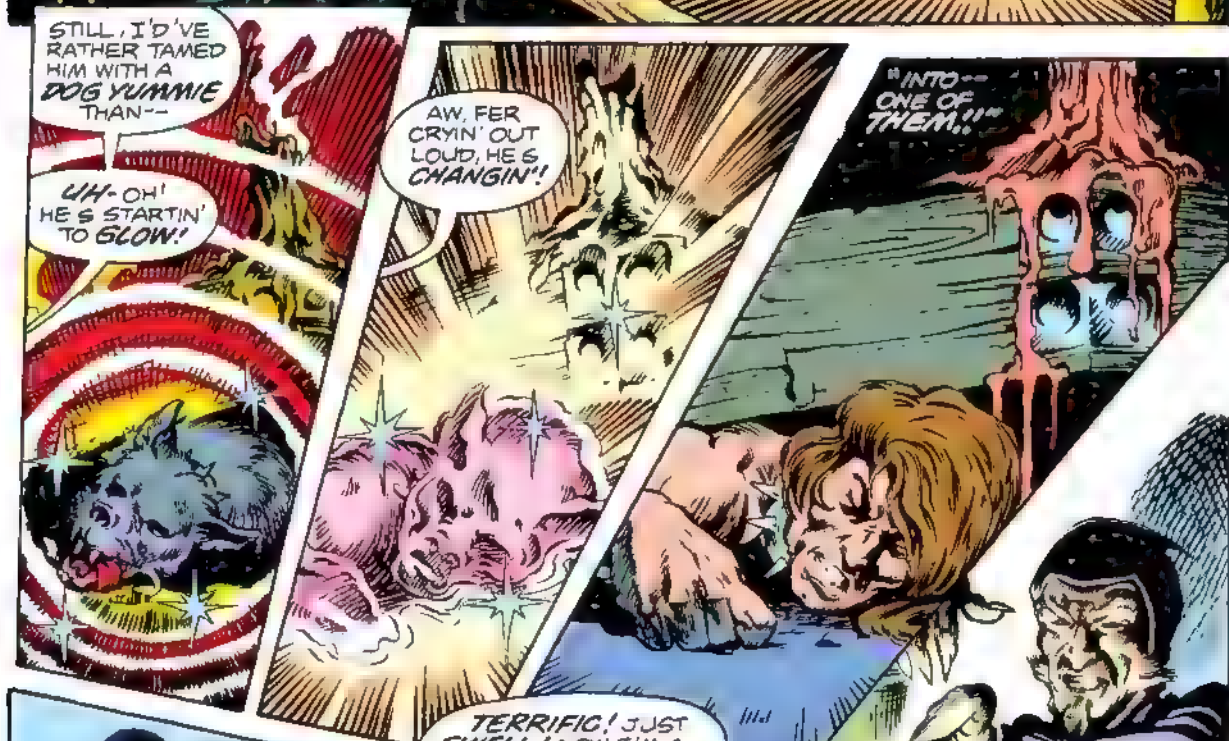




...IN A VIOLENT, WHOLLY UNEXPECTED FASHION.

HOLY CROW!
IT CRUSHED HIM!
TALK ABOUT A
DOG'S LUCK--!

POOR GUY BUT
AT LEAST HE DIDN'T
SUFFER.



STILL, I'D'VE
RATHER TAMED
HIM WITH A
DOG YUMMY
THAN--

UH-OH!
HE'S STARTIN'
TO GLOW!

AW, FER
CRYIN' OUT
LOUD, HE'S
CHANGIN'!

INTO--
ONE OF
THEM!!



TERRIFIC! JUST
SWELL! NOW I'M A
MURDERER! I COME
HERE TO WIPE ME
OUT, AND INSTEAD--

YOU'LL HAVE
AMPLE OPPOR-
TUNITY TO MEET
YOUR DOOM.
I SHALL SEE
TO THAT.

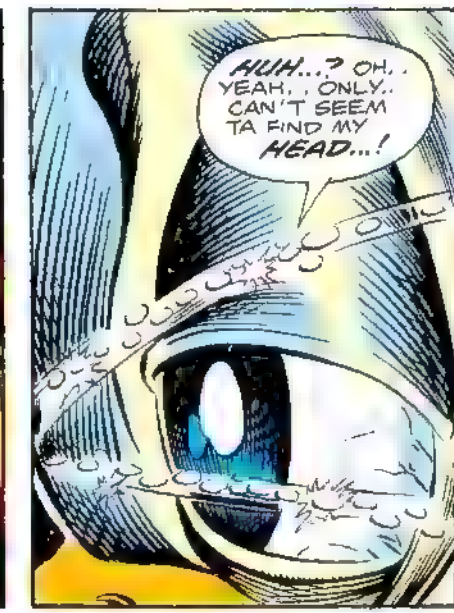
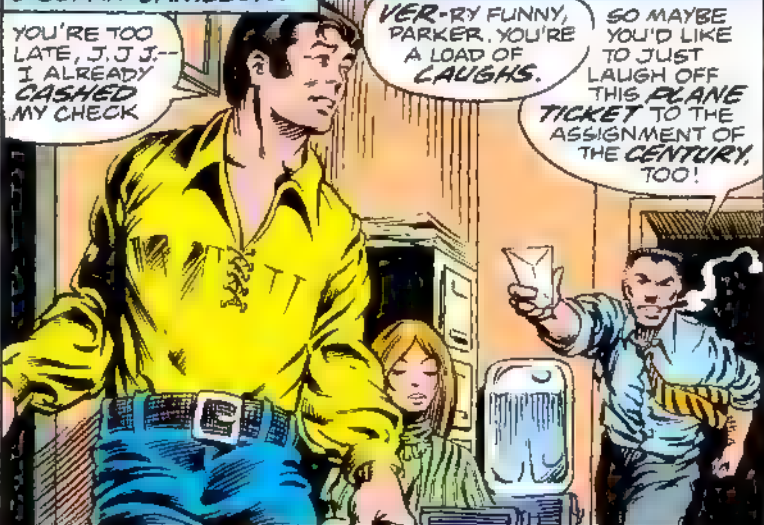
HAVE NO
FEAR,
FEATHERED
INTERLOPER

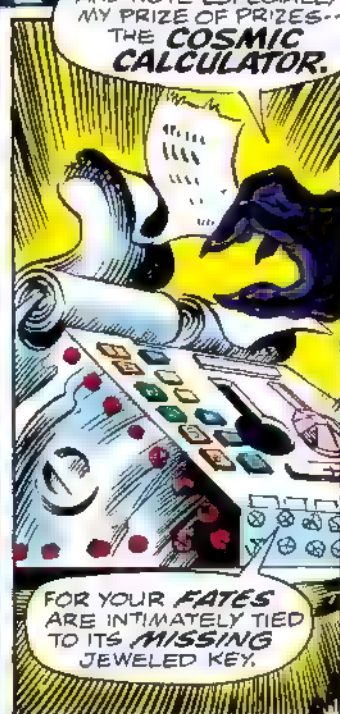
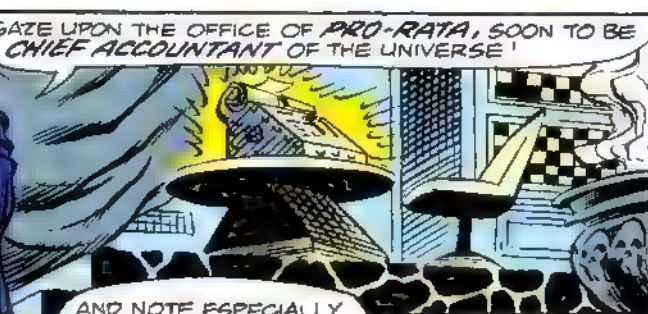
WE-E-AUGH!

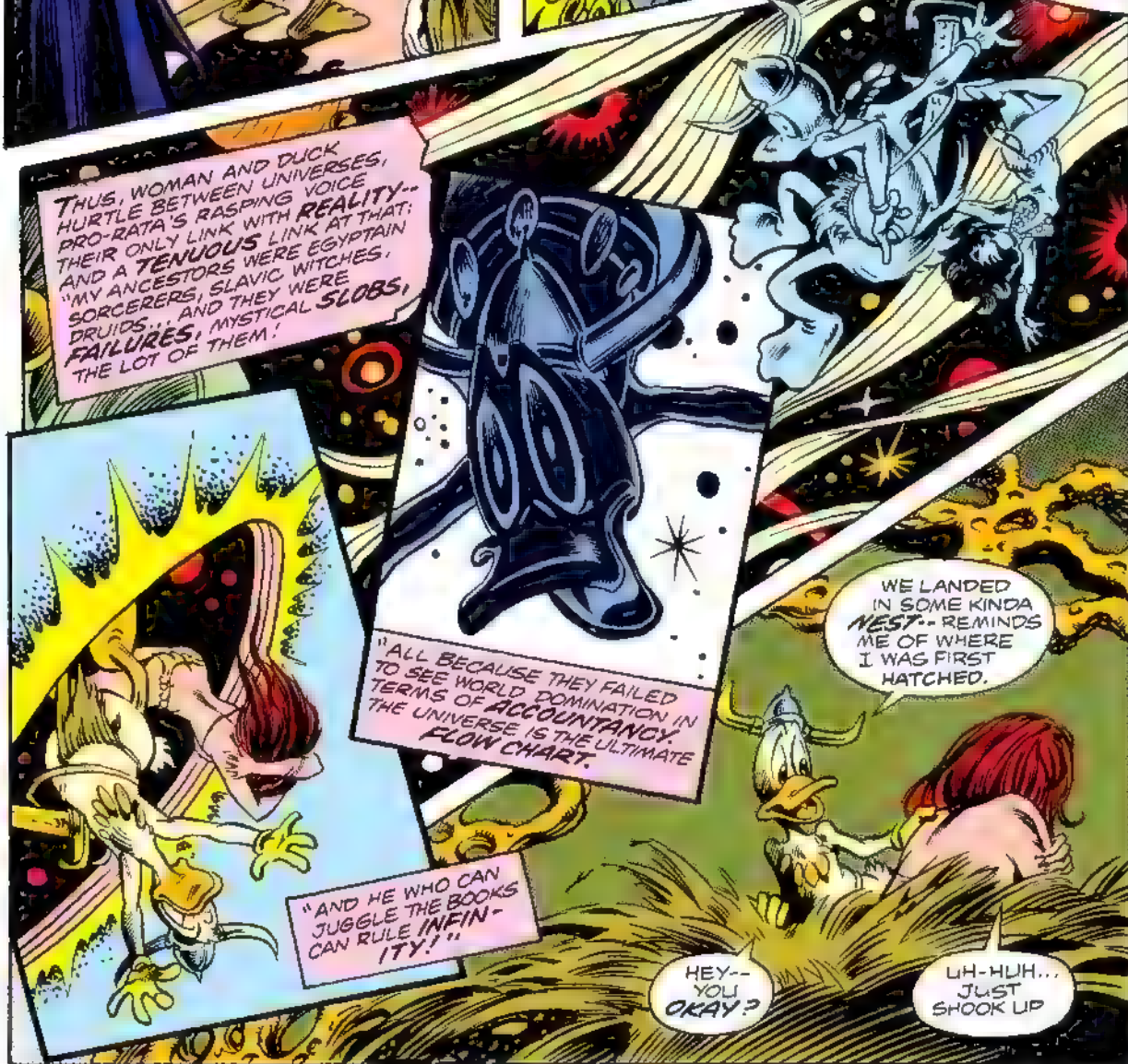
THIS, HOWARD LIES UNCONSCIOUS AS NIGHT PASSES INTO MORNING, AS, SOME 500 MILES AWAY...

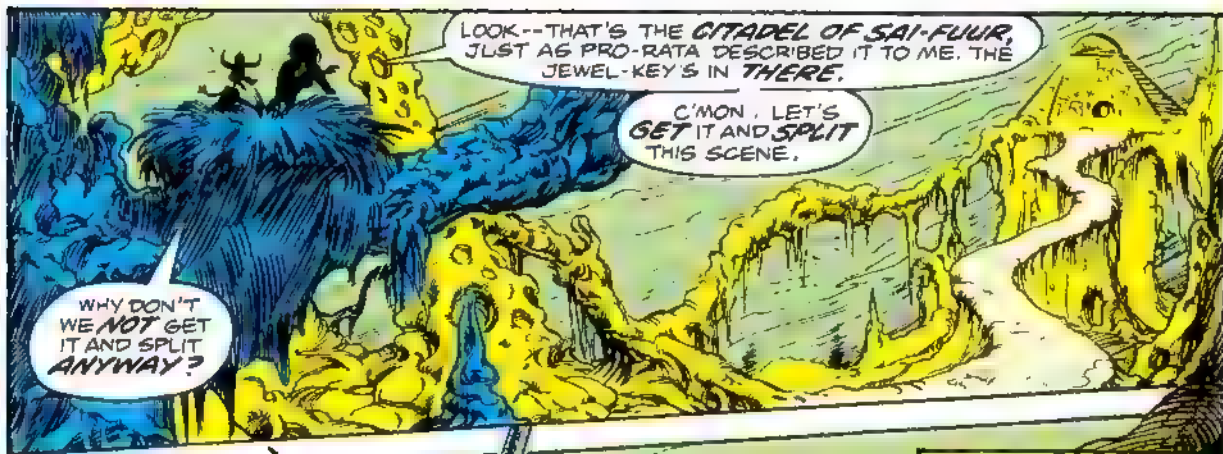


...IN THE OFFICES OF THE NEW YORK DAILY BUGLE, ACE SHUTTERBUG PETER PARKER IS ACCOSTED BY PUBLISHER J. JONAH JAMESON.









LOOK--THAT'S THE CITADEL OF SAI-FLUR, JUST AS PRO-RATA DESCRIBED IT TO ME. THE JEWEL-KEY'S IN *THERE*.

C'MON. LET'S GET IT AND *SPLIT* THIS SCENE.

WHY DON'T WE *NOT* GET IT AND SPLIT ANYWAY?



BY THE RED COLUMN!

'CAUSE PRO-RATA'S WATCHING US, DUCKY!

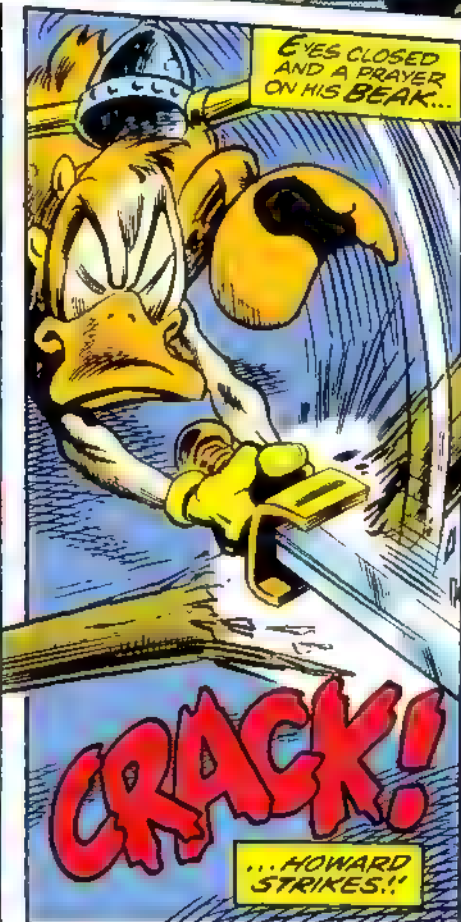


A DAMSEL-- PURSUED BY A NEWLY-HATCHED BAHNDBIRD!



MUST SLAY IT-- BEFORE IT MATURES!

WHY AM I SURE HE'S TALKING ABOUT ME?

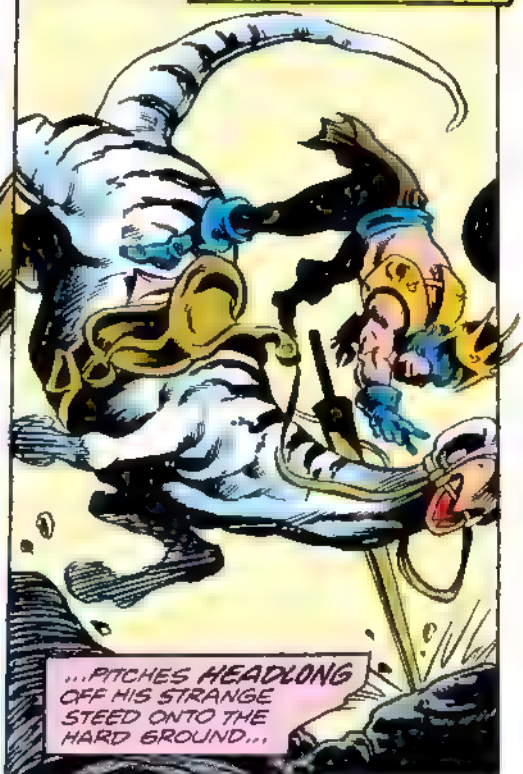


EYES CLOSED AND A PRAYER ON HIS BEAK...

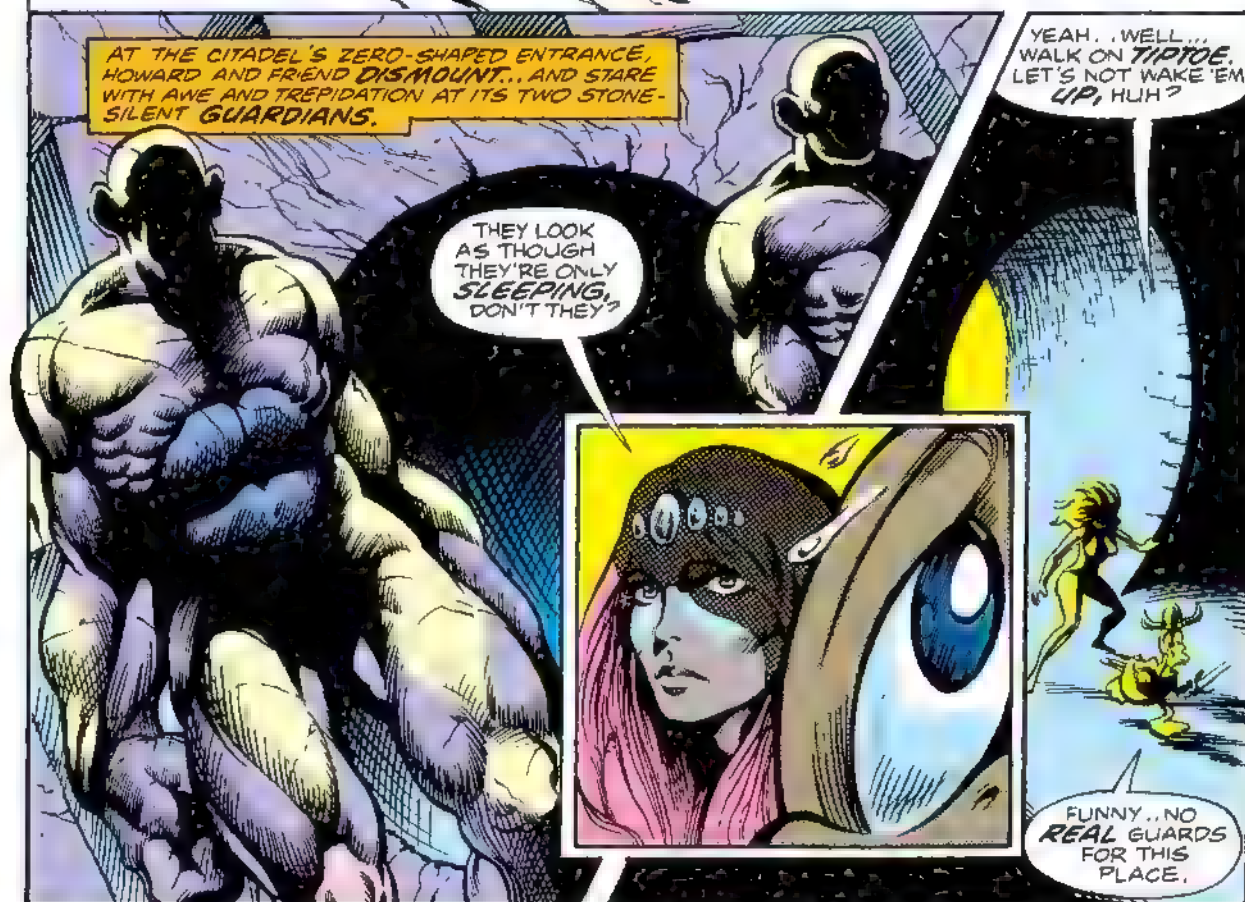
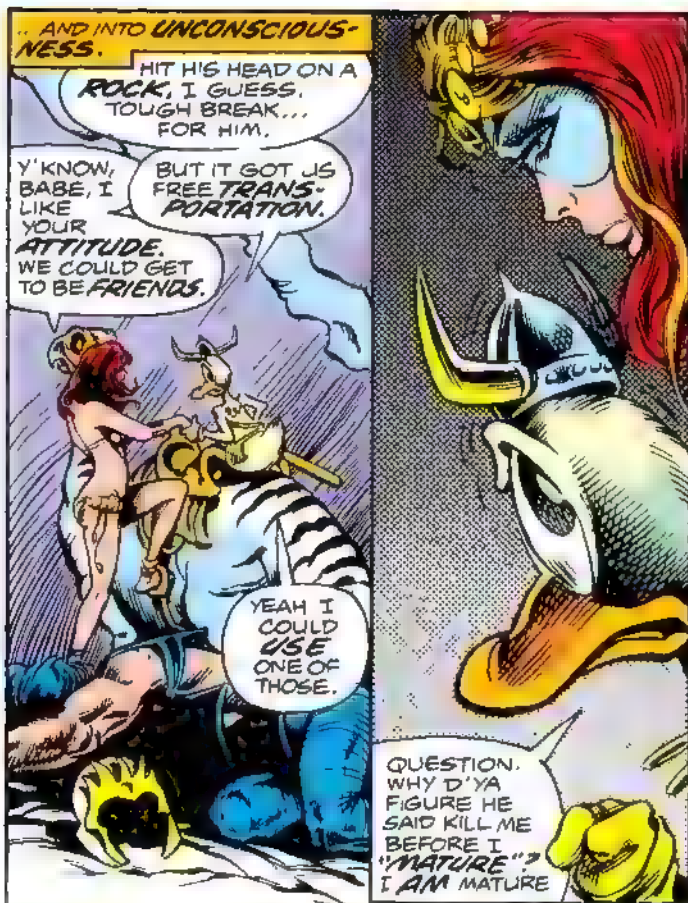
CRACK!

...HOWARD STRIKES!!

AND THE WARRIOR, HIS LANCE SHATTERED...



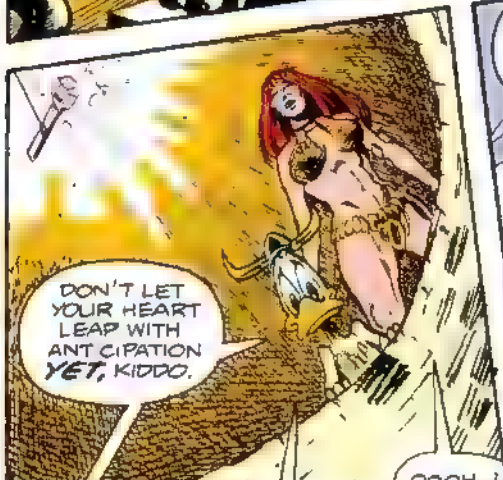
...PITCHES HEADLONG OFF HIS STRANGE STEED ONTO THE HARD GROUND...





YEAH, I EXPECTED AN **OBSTACLE COURSE** AT THE VERY **LEAST**.

BUT THERE'S THE JEWEL-KEY-- RIGHT UP **AWAY** FAR OUT!

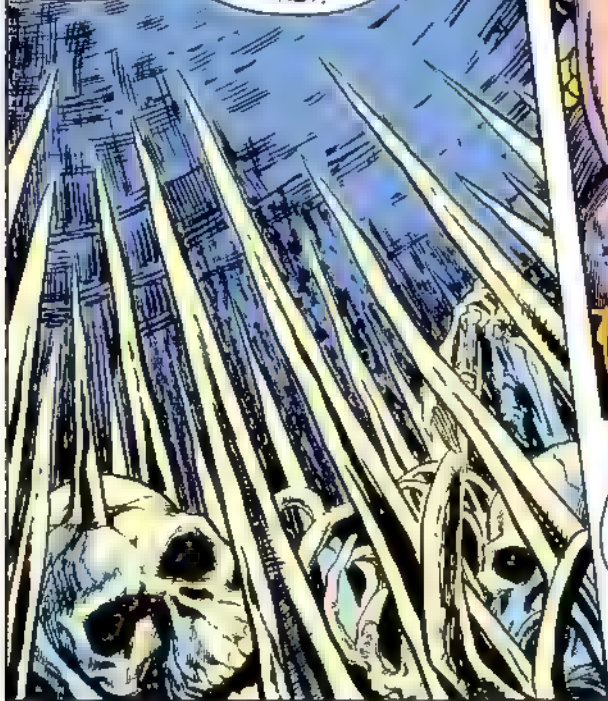


DON'T LET YOUR HEART LEAP WITH ANTICIPATION YET, KIDDO.

OOOH...

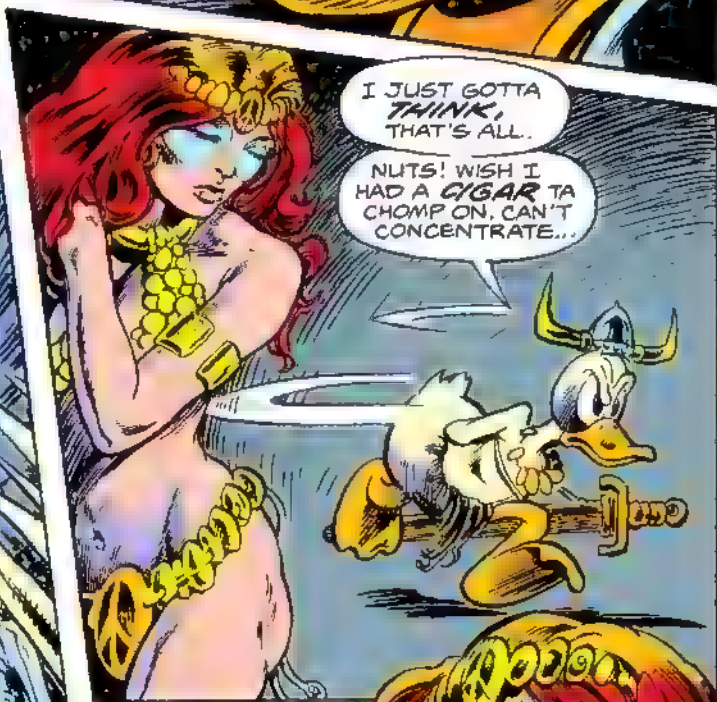
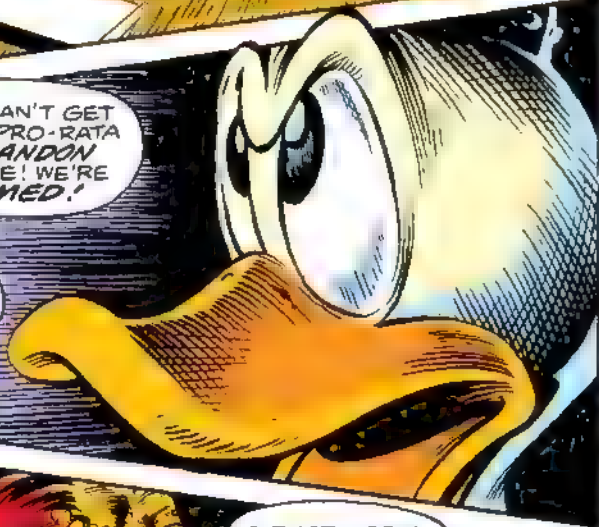
THERE'S A GOOD REASON WE COULD JUST WALTZ IN HERE.

CATCH WHAT HAPPENED TO THE **LAST** GUY WHO TRIED TO GET THAT KEY.



IF WE CAN'T GET THE KEY, PRO-RATA WILL **ABANDON** US HERE! WE'RE **DOOMED!**

I DIDN'T SAY **THAT**.

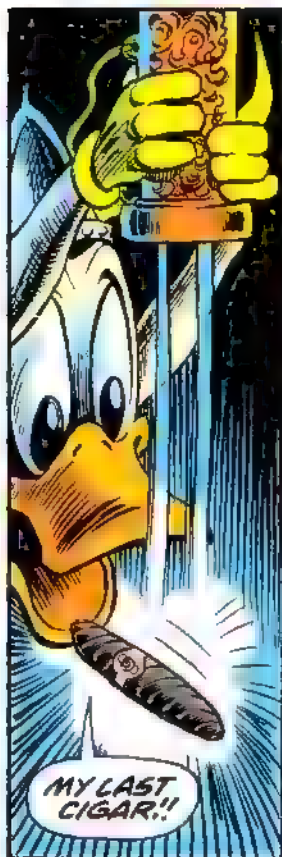


I JUST GOTTA **THINK**, THAT'S ALL.

NUTS! WISH I HAD A **CIGAR** TO CHOMP ON. CAN'T CONCENTRATE...

OH, I CAN HELP YOU WITH **THAT**. LOOK IN YOUR **SCABBARD**, DUCKY





MY LAST CIGAR!!



I FOUND IT IN YOUR BREAST POCKET... WITH YOUR *MATCHES*.

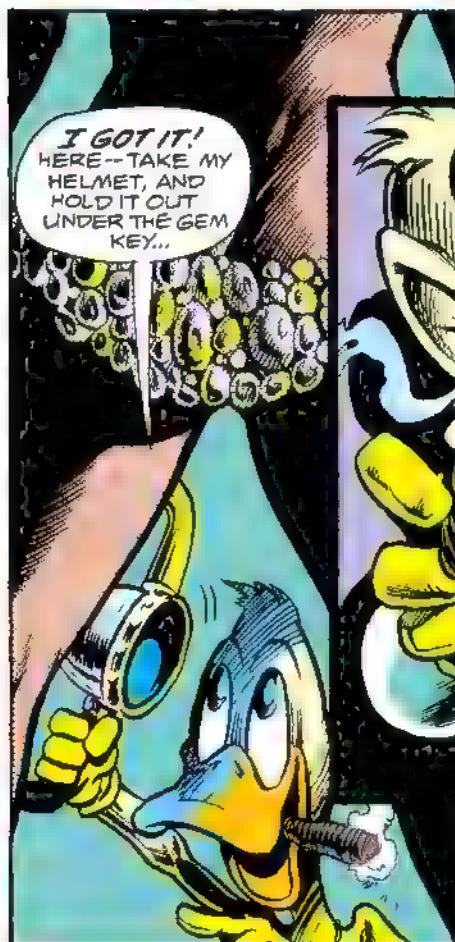


I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT *WANT* IT... FOR A MOMENT LIKE THIS. SO I R SKED PRO-RATA'S *ANGER*, AND...!

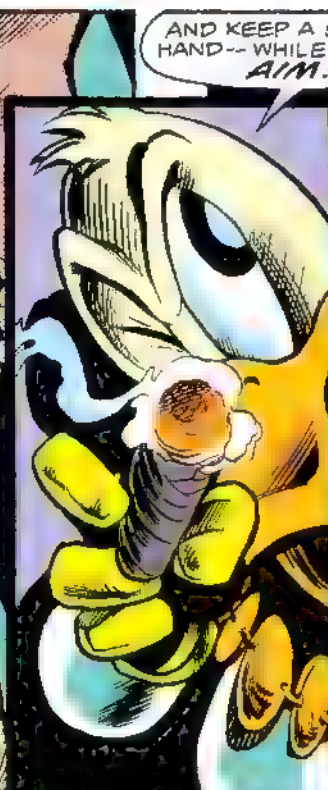


SAY NO MORE, KID, YOU'RE ONE OF THE *GOOD PEOPLE* IN MY BOOK.

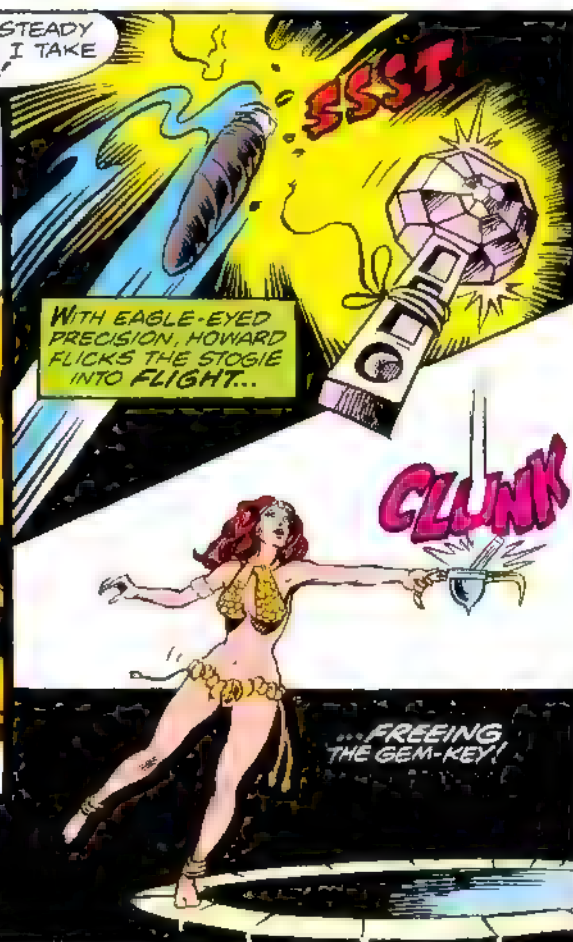
NOW JUST LET ME *COGITATE* A SECOND OR TWO...



I GOT IT! HERE-- TAKE MY HELMET, AND HOLD IT OUT UNDER THE GEM KEY...



AND KEEP A STEADY HAND-- WHILE I TAKE *AIM*!



WITH EAGLE-EYED PRECISION, HOWARD FLICKS THE STOGIE INTO FLIGHT...

CLUNK

...FREEING THE GEM-KEY!

THIS IS THE VICTORY WON...
BUT AT A PRICE.

DON'T GET
MISTY-EYED.
THERE'LL BE
OTHER CIGARS...

...WHEN WE'RE
HOME **SAFE**.
WE'VE GOTTA
GET BACK TO THE
NEST, SO PRO-
RATA CAN OPEN
THE RETURN
PORTAL FOR US.

AND WE'VE GOTTA
HURRY. SOMETHING'S
GONNA **HAPPEN**.
I CAN FEEL IT IN
MY **BONES**.

PERCEPTIVE
SKELETON
YOU'VE GOT
THERE, TOOTS!

KRE-E-ECK

GET YOUR
GIRLIE IN
GEAR, KID.
THEY'RE
BIG-- BUT
SLOW.

MAYBE WE
CAN **OUT-**
RUN 'EM--

WHEN WE
PULLED
OFF THIS
LITTLE
HEIST--

WE SET
OFF THE
**BURGLAR
ALARM!!**

OH,
NO!!

"YE GODZ," HOWARD CRIES.
"THE NEST-- THE SLUR ON
MY MATURITY--IT ALL
MAKES SENSE NOW--"

"IT'S JUST
ATTACKING
ANYTHING THAT
MOVES.
MAYBE IT'LL
TAKE OUT THE
GRANITE
TWIN'S FOR US,"
THE GIRL
WHISPERS.

"--MORE
OR LESS--"

"SCORE
ANOTHER
POINT
FOR YOUR
BONES, SIS,"
THE DUCK
RESPONDS.

QUICK--BEHIND
THIS ROCK! IT
HASN'T SEEN
US YET!

'COURSE, IF
IT'S HUNGRY...
IT'S GONNA
DOPE OUT
PRETTY FAST
THAT THOSE
GUYS AIN'T
EDIBLE.

LISTEN...I
KNOW IT SOUNDS
SILLY...BUT IF
WE'RE GOING TO
DIE TOGETHER...

YOU'RE RIGHT!
IT'S TURNING--
COMING AFTER
US!

"I'D LIKE
TO KNOW
YOUR
NAME."

HUH?
OH--IT'S
HOWARD.

MINE'S
BEVERLY--
BEVERLY
SWITZLER.
I--

WAIT! WHAT'S
HAPPENING TO
US? WE'RE
FADING
AWAY--!!

AND AT THAT INSTANT, BACK IN CLEVELAND...

ADMIT IT, PARKER--YOU'VE BEEN HAD! JAMESON WINS THIS ONE.

YOU'D THINK, AFTER YEARS OF SUPERHEROING, I'D DEVELOP A HEALTHY SKEPTICISM.

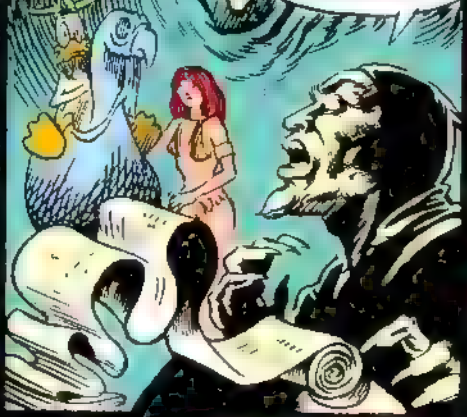


BUT NO, J.J.J. SENDS ME TO THE ARMPIT OF THE NATION TO SNAP PIX OF A TALKING DUCK--AND I FALL FOR IT!

BUT, BARELY A MILE AWAY...

UH...I THINK YA RANG UP MORE THAN YOU BAR-GAINED FOR, WIZ

THE BAHND-BIRD! MUST'VE HIT THE WRONG DECIMAL!



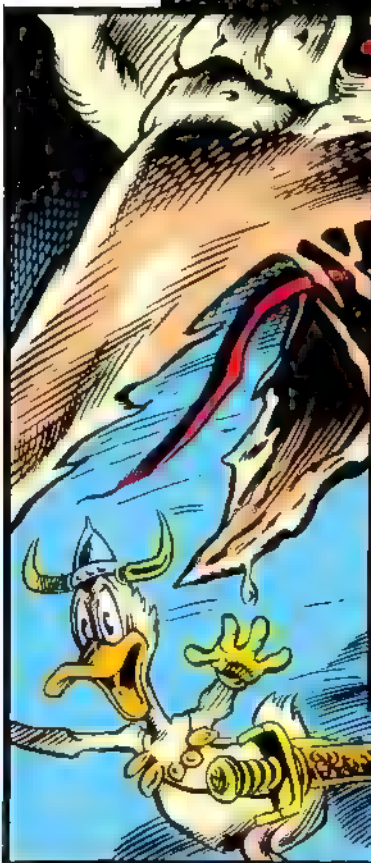
"STAND ASIDE," PRO-RAYA CRIES, "I MUST RECALCULATE-- SEND THE MONSTER BACK TO ITS NEST BEFORE--"



--IT FLAPS ITS WINGS.

THE KEY! GIVE ME THE KEY!!

IT'S OUR ONLY HOPE OF CONTROLLING THE BIRD!





OKAY... SO I MAY NOT
RECOGNIZE A JOKE
WHEN IT HITS ME IN
THE FACE.

BUT MY SPIDER-
SENSE NEVER LIES
ABOUT TROUBLE.
THAT WAS AN
EXPLOSION I
HEARD.

AND THE
DAY'S BEEN
JUST DULL
ENOUGH TO
JUST FY HITCHING
A RIDE TO CHECK
IT OUT.



I'LL BROOK NO **DAWDLING**,
DUCK! HAND OVER THE KEY--
AND YOU AND THE WOMAN
ARE FREE TO GO!

WHILE
YOU SET
YOURSELF
UP AS A
GOD,
RIGHT?



STOP!
WHAT
MADNESS
IS--?

SORRY, MAC--
NO DICE! IF YOUR
COSMIC CALCULATOR
CAN REALLY DO
THAT--

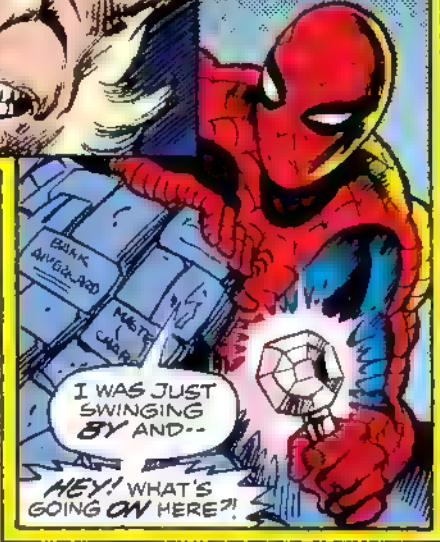


YOU FOOL **FOWL!** WHEN THIS
YOU'VE THROWN MONSTROS-
AWAY OUR LIVES! ITY ADAPTS
TO ITS NEW
REALITY--**WE**
SHALL BE
ITS PREY!

RIGHT, YOU'RE
JUST LOOKING
OUT FOR MY
WELFARE. **SURE.**

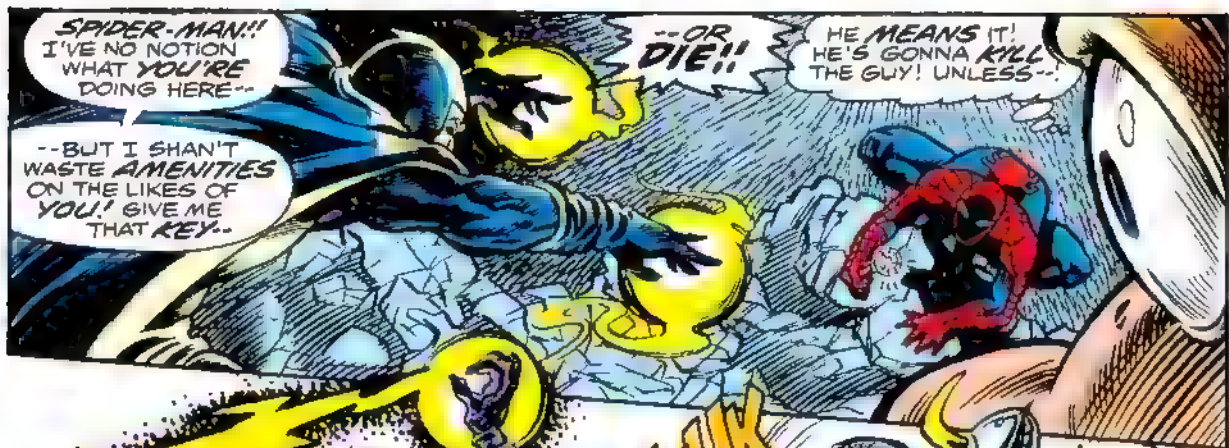
SCUSE
THE **INTRU-**
SION, BUT
DID ANYBODY
LOSE THIS?

--IT'S TOO
POWERFUL
FOR ANY-
BODY TO
POSSESS!



I WAS JUST
SWINGING
BY AND--

HEY! WHAT'S
GOING ON HERE?!



SPIDER-MAN!!
I'VE NO NOTION
WHAT YOU'RE
DOING HERE--

--OR
DIE!!

HE MEANS IT!
HE'S GONNA KILL
THE GUY! UNLESS--!

--BUT I SHAN'T
WASTE AMENITIES
ON THE LIKES OF
YOU! GIVE ME
THAT KEY--

THUK

AARGH

HIS AIM SPOILED
BY THE JARRING
IMPACT OF THE
SCABBARD--

--PRO-RATA'S
MYSTICAL BOLT
SAILS OVER
THE WEB-
SLINGER'S
HEAD--

I'LL WORRY
LATER
OVER
WHETHER
I BELIEVE
THIS.

--INTO THE MURKISH
CUYAHOGA,
IGNITING THE
VOLATILE
POLLUTANTS
THEREIN!

FOR NOW, I'LL
JUST MAKE SURE
NONE OF US
BECOMES
DINNER FOR
POLLY PARROT
HERE!

THEN MAYBE I
CAN HELP OUT
THE LITTLE GUY
WHO SAVED
MY LIFE!

--BUT THERE WOULD BE NO BUDGET-ARY LOGIC IN THAT! NO WAY TO JUSTIFY THE EXPENDITURE OF MAGIC!

BUT SPIDER-MAN'S DEATH WILL NET ME THE GEM-KEY! I'LL PROFIT BY DESTROY-ING HIM!

BAH! I COULD REDUCE YOU TO DRUMSTICKS WITH A SINGLE SPELL, DUCK--

HE'S GONNA TRY AGAIN! AND THIS TIME I'VE GOT NOTHING TO THROW--

--EXCEPT MYSELF!!

SURE--WHY NOT? I WAS ABOUT TO OFF MYSELF ANYWAY,

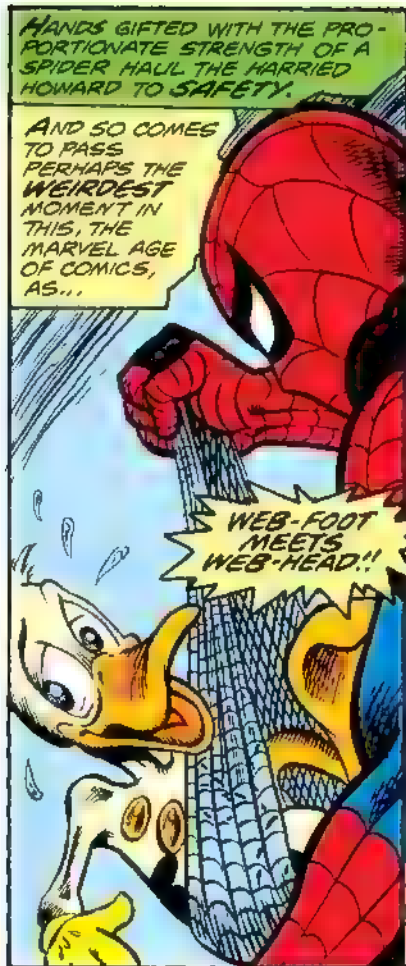
MAY AS WELL USE MY LIFE TO STOP THIS WACKO!

THUS, THE COURAGEOUS DUCK AND THE EVIL CONJURER PLUNGE DOWNWARD-- DEATHWARD-- TOGETHER! THE FLAMING WATERS SEEM TO RISE TO MEET THEM-- HOWARD'S EYES PRESS SHUT IN HORROR-- AND THEN--

YAAAAAGG!

FW-IP

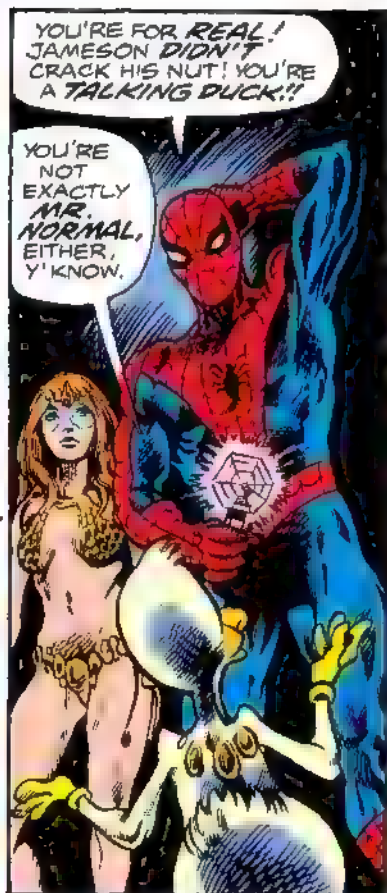
SALVATION!



HANDS GIFTED WITH THE PRO-PORTIONATE STRENGTH OF A SPIDER HAUL THE HARRIED HOWARD TO SAFETY.

AND SO COMES TO PASS PERHAPS THE WEIRDEST MOMENT IN THIS, THE MARVEL AGE OF COMICS, AS...

WEB-FOOT MEETS WEB-HEAD!!



YOU'RE FOR REAL! JAMESON DIDN'T CRACK HIS NUT! YOU'RE A TALKING DUCK!!

YOU'RE NOT EXACTLY MR. NORMAL, EITHER, Y'KNOW.



AND WHILE YOU WERE SPOUTIN' OFF, TELLIN' ME WHAT I ALREADY KNOW--

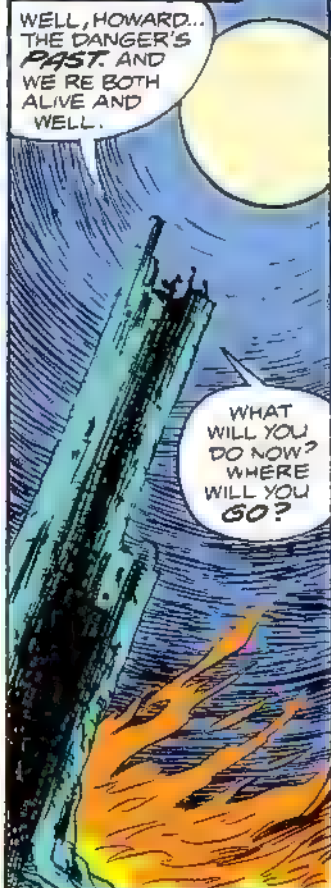
--PRO-RATA'S PARAKEET FLEW THE COOP!



LOOK-- YOU KEEP THE JEWEL-KEY. I'LL SEE ABOUT TRACKING DOWN BIG BIRD.

GOTTA GO NOW. HERE COMES MY CONVENIENT HELICOPTER.

YEAH. SEE YA BE SURE AN' WRITE.



WELL, HOWARD... THE DANGER'S PAST. AND WE'RE BOTH ALIVE AND WELL.

WHAT WILL YOU DO NOW? WHERE WILL YOU GO?



I DUNNO... BUT I SURE COULD USE A GOOD CIGAR.

NEXT: THE STAR-SPAWNED THREAT OF THE DEADLY SPACE TURNIP! BE HERE!

HOWARD
THE DUCK

MARVEL COMICS GROUP



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TRAPPED IN A WORLD HE NEVER MADE!

HOWARD THE DUCK



NOTHING CAN
SAVE YOU NOW,
DUCK--YOU'RE
AT THE MERCY
OF--

--THE
DEADLY
SPACE
TURNIP!



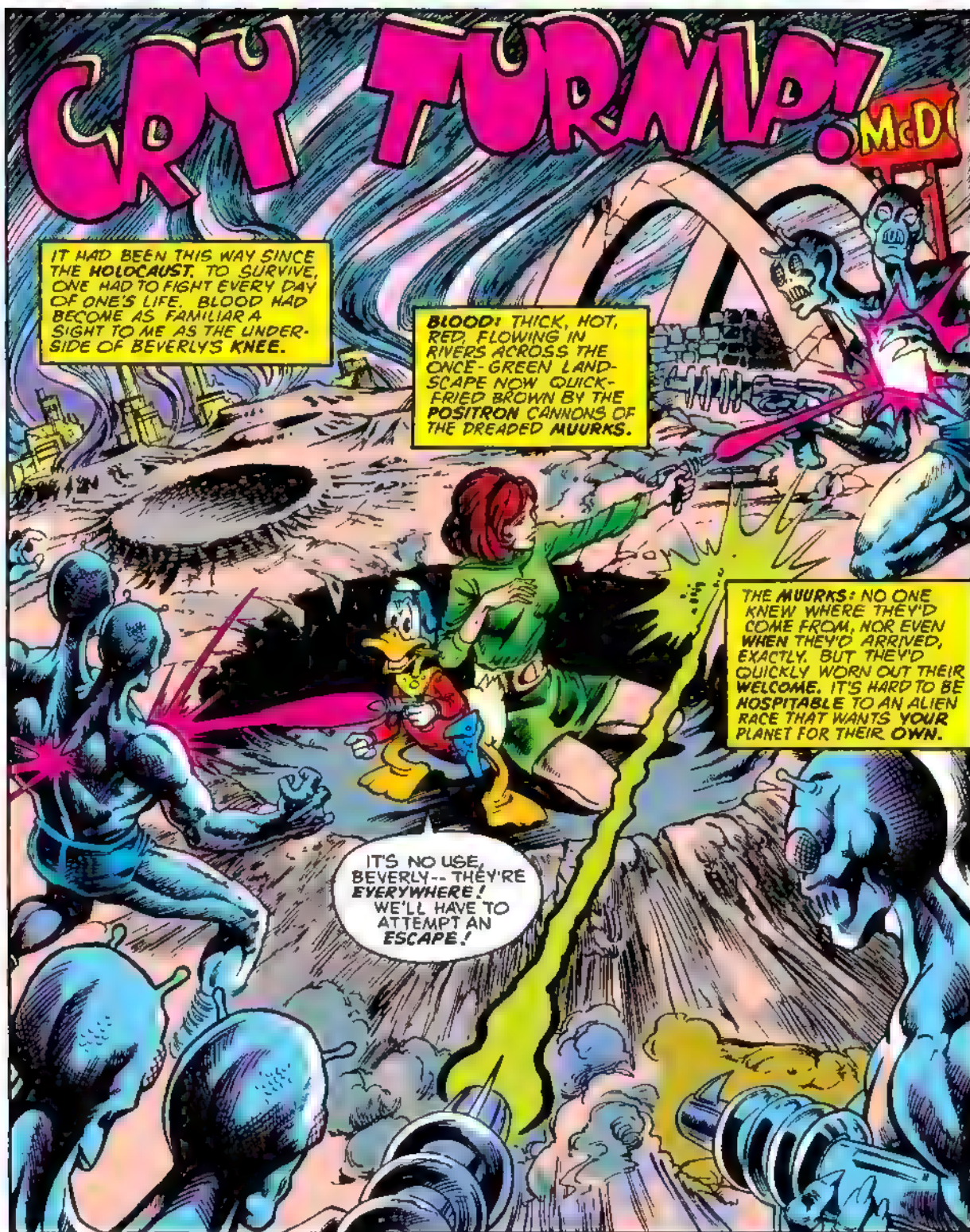
BRUNNER

Stan Lee PRESENTS: HOWARD THE DUCK!™

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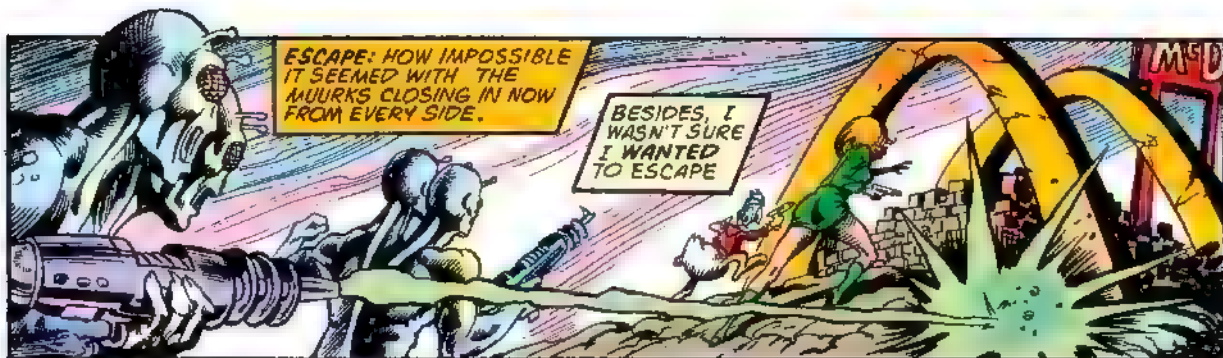


IT HAD BEEN THIS WAY SINCE THE HOLOCAUST. TO SURVIVE, ONE HAD TO FIGHT EVERY DAY OF ONE'S LIFE. BLOOD HAD BECOME AS FAMILIAR A SIGHT TO ME AS THE UNDER-SIDE OF BEVERLY'S KNEE.

BLOOD: THICK, HOT, RED FLOWING IN RIVERS ACROSS THE ONCE-GREEN LANDSCAPE NOW QUICK-FRIED BROWN BY THE POSITRON CANNONS OF THE DREADED MUURKS.

THE MUURKS: NO ONE KNEW WHERE THEY'D COME FROM, NOR EVEN WHEN THEY'D ARRIVED, EXACTLY. BUT THEY'D QUICKLY WORN OUT THEIR WELCOME. IT'S HARD TO BE HOSPITABLE TO AN ALIEN RACE THAT WANTS YOUR PLANET FOR THEIR OWN.

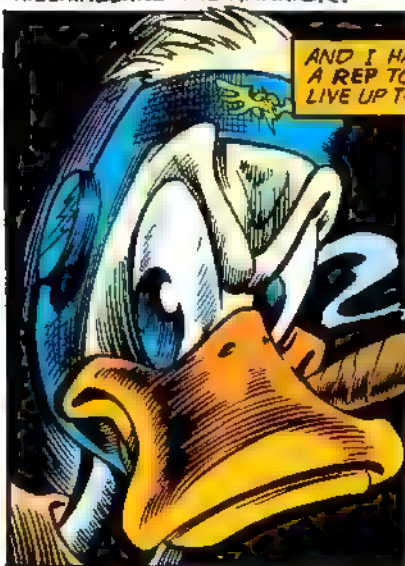
IT'S NO USE, BEVERLY-- THEY'RE EVERYWHERE! WE'LL HAVE TO ATTEMPT AN ESCAPE!



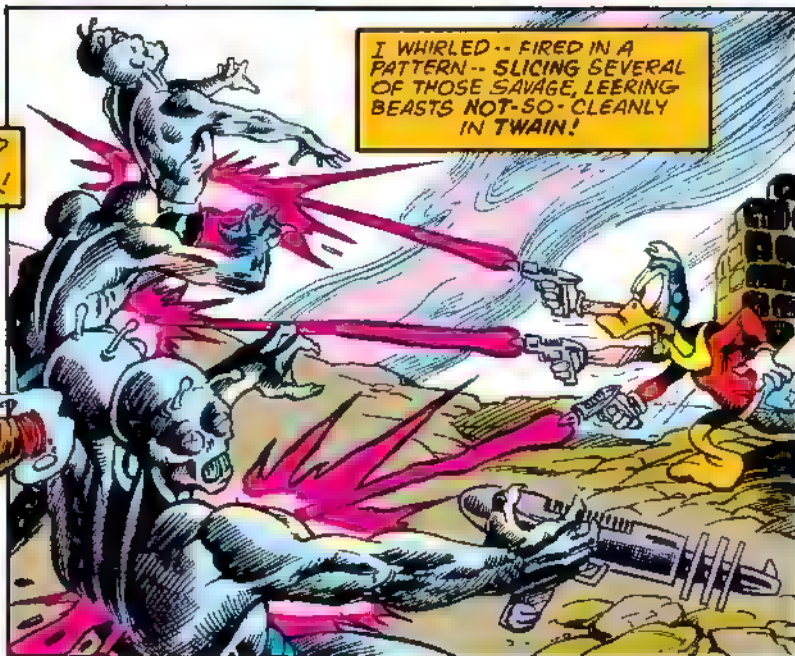
ESCAPE: HOW IMPOSSIBLE IT SEEMED WITH THE MUURKS CLOSING IN NOW FROM EVERY SIDE.

BESIDES, I WASN'T SURE I WANTED TO ESCAPE

WHATEVER ELSE I MAY HAVE BEEN-- DISMAYED, PANIC-STRICKEN, TERRIFIED-- I WAS STILL KILLMALLARD THE WARRIOR.

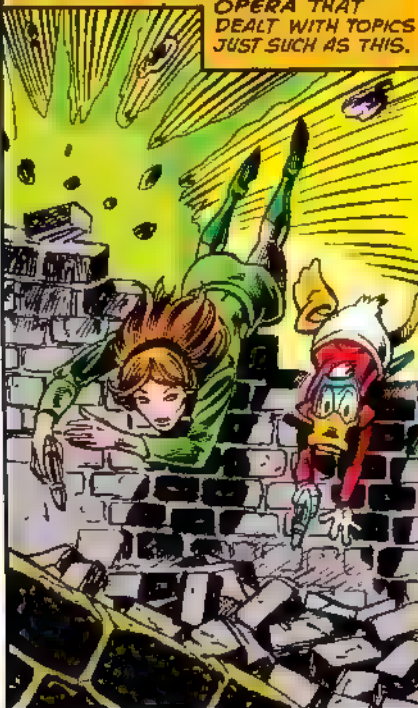


AND I HAD A REP TO LIVE UP TO!

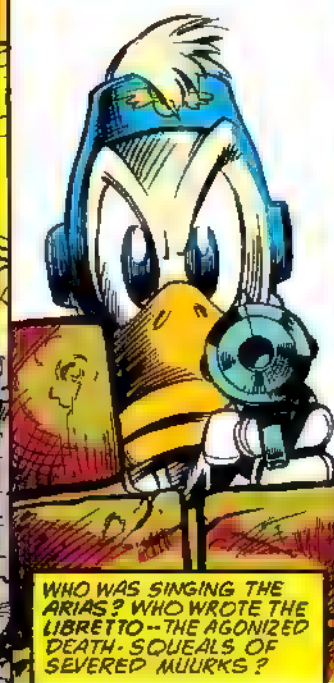


I WHIRLED-- FIRED IN A PATTERN-- SLICING SEVERAL OF THOSE SAVAGE, LEERING BEASTS NOT-SO-CLEANLY IN TWAIN!

I RECALLED THE HISTORY TEXTS, A PARAGRAPH ABOUT A SUB-GENRE OF LITERATURE KNOWN AS SPACE-OPERA THAT DEALT WITH TOPICS JUST SUCH AS THIS.

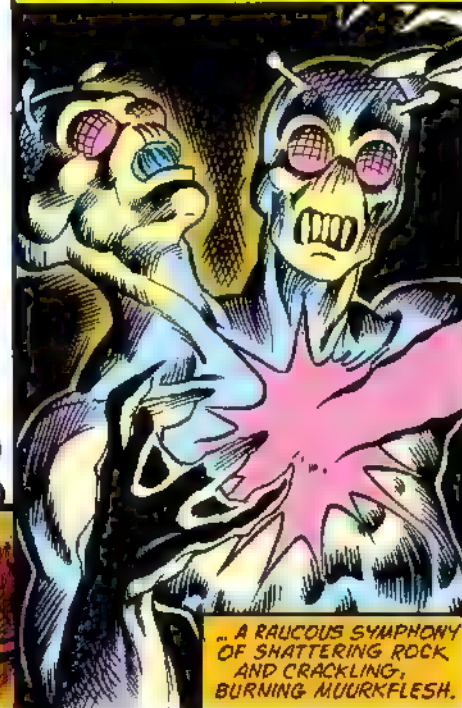


A GRIM SMILE WHERE WAS THE "OPERA" IN MY STRUGGLE?



WHO WAS SINGING THE ARIAS? WHO WROTE THE LIBRETTO--THE AGONIZED DEATH-SQUEALS OF SEVERED MUURKS?

NO, THERE WERE NO SONGS THIS NIGHT. AND THE ONLY ORCHESTRATION WAS THE DIN OF DESTRUCTION. ALL ABOUT US...



... A RAUCOUS SYMPHONY OF SHATTERING ROCK AND CRACKLING, BURNING MUURKFLESH.

AND ONE
OTHER
SOUND.

BEVERLY
AND I
RECOG-
NIZED IT
INSTANTLY.

CLUNCH
CLUNCH

A MUURKIAN SEPTOPOD-- ONE OF THE
SEVEN-LEGGED MECHANICAL MONSTROSITI-
ES THE SCALY DEVILS HAD EMPLOYED
IN THEIR SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN TO WALK
ALL OVER US!

CONSTRUCTED OF
THE ALIEN METAL
MAURKONIUM, THEY
WERE IMPERVIOUS
TO OUR HIGHEST-
INTENSITY PLASMA-
BURSTS.

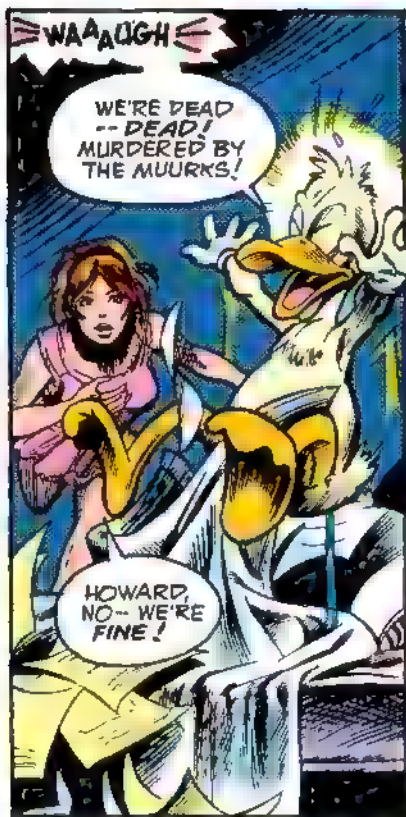
BEVERLY AND I WERE, IN A WORD, DOOMED TO
THE MOST HORRIFYING AND BRUTAL DEMISE
KNOWN ON THIS WORLD SINCE THE DAY WHEN
CORPORATE MONSTERS ROSE ENCASED IN
GLASS AND STEEL AND SWALLOWED OUR AN-
CESTORS WHOLE INTO THEIR BUREAUCRATIC
DIGESTIVE TRACTS, REDUCING THEIR MINDS TO
GELATIN AND THEIR BONES TO ROUGHAGE,
MAKING WASTE-MATTER OF PEOPLE, THEN
CALLOUSLY ELIMINATING THEM AT AGE SIXTY-
FIVE, SIXTY-TWO FOR WOMEN.

NO HOPE. OUR
RAY-FIRE
SERVED ONLY
TO HEAT THE
ALLOY FOOT
SO THAT WE
WOULD NOT ONLY
BE CRUSHED...

... BUT COOKED AS WELL.

WAAUGH

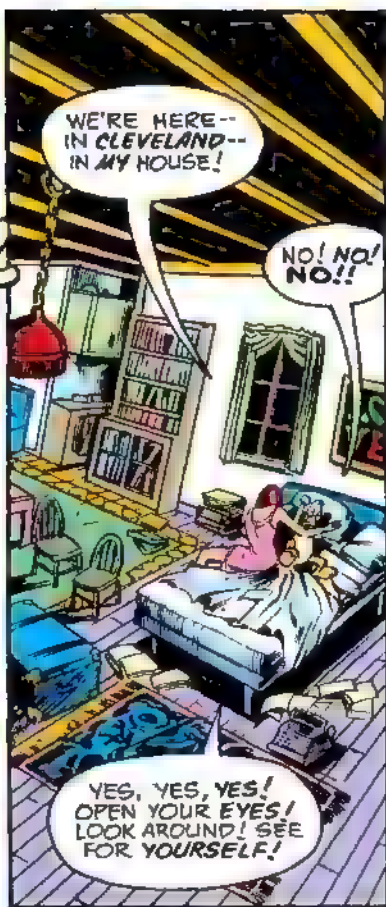
HOWARD...?



WAAUGH

WE'RE DEAD
-- DEAD!
MURDERED BY
THE MUURKS!

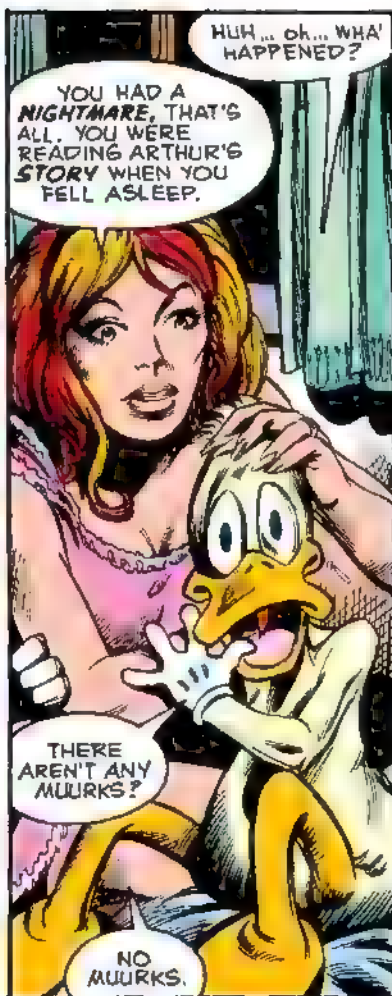
HOWARD,
NO-- WE'RE
FINE!



WE'RE HERE--
IN CLEVELAND--
IN MY HOUSE!

NO! NO!
NO!!

YES, YES, YES!
OPEN YOUR EYES!
LOOK AROUND! SEE
FOR YOURSELF!



HUH... Oh... WHA!
HAPPENED?

YOU HAD A
NIGHTMARE, THAT'S
ALL. YOU WERE
READING ARTHUR'S
STORY WHEN YOU
FELL ASLEEP.

THERE
AREN'T ANY
MUURKS?

NO
MUURKS.



BUT I'VE GOT
COFFEE AND
BALONEY SAND-
WICHES READY,
IF YOU'RE
INTERESTED.

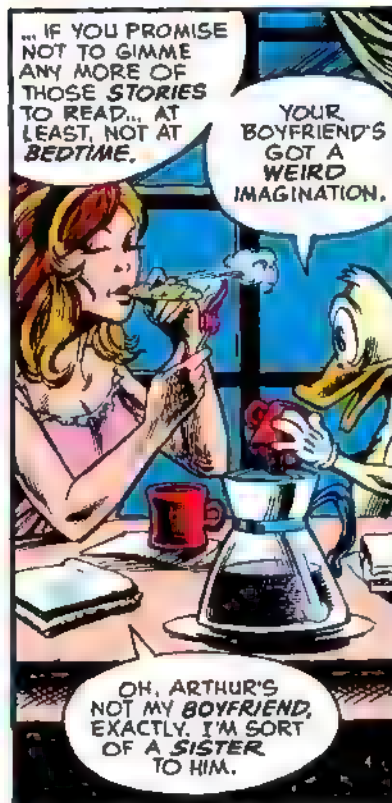
YEAH...
YEAH,
THAT
SOUNDS
GOOD. I'M
STARVED.

YOU
WOULDN'T BY
ANY CHANCE...
HAVE A CIGAR
AROUND TOO,
WOULDJA?



SURPRISE. I KEEP 'EM
AROUND FOR ARTHUR.
I DON'T THINK HE'D
MIND...!

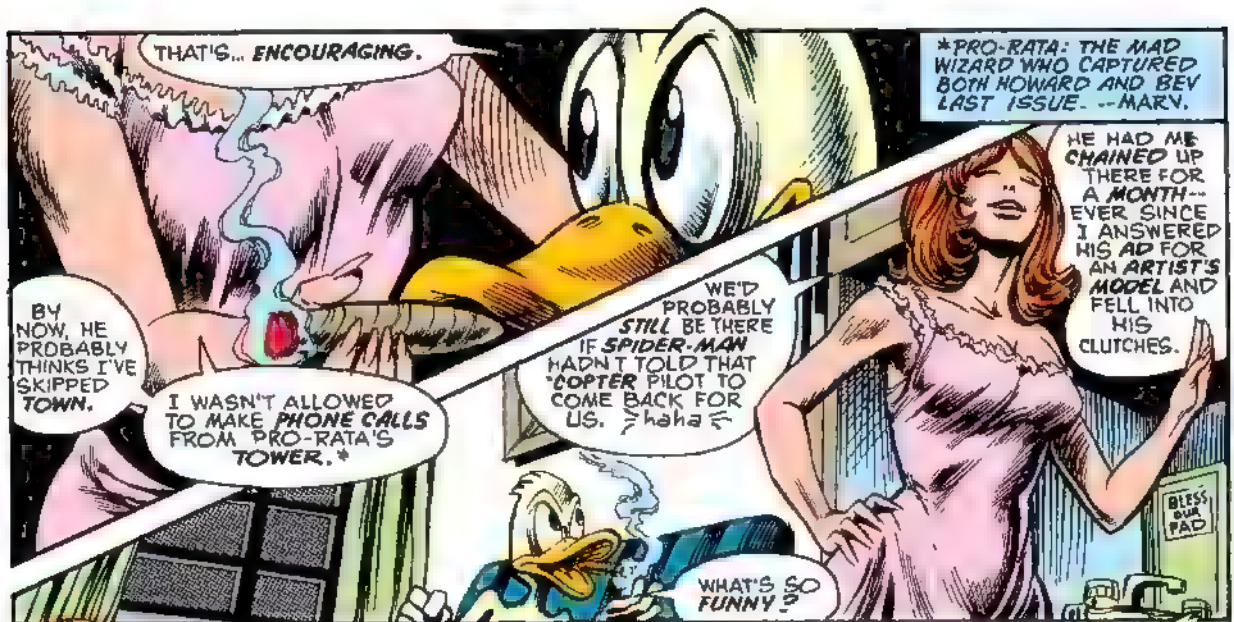
TOOTS, I
THINK YOU 'N'
ME ARE GONNA
GET ALONG...



... IF YOU PROMISE
NOT TO GIMME
ANY MORE OF
THOSE STORIES
TO READ... AT
LEAST, NOT AT
BEDTIME.

YOUR
BOYFRIEND'S
GOT A
WEIRD
IMAGINATION.

OH, ARTHUR'S
NOT MY BOYFRIEND,
EXACTLY. I'M SORT
OF A SISTER
TO HIM.



THAT'S... ENCOURAGING.

*PRO-RATA: THE MAD WIZARD WHO CAPTURED BOTH HOWARD AND BEV LAST ISSUE. --MARV.

BY NOW, HE PROBABLY THINKS I'VE SKIPPED TOWN.

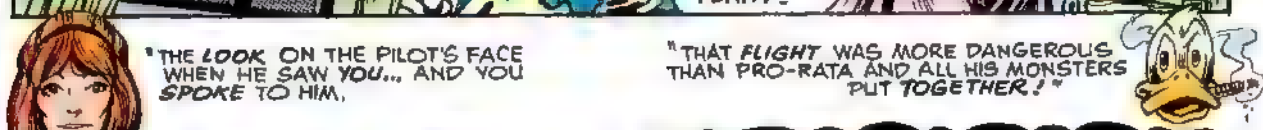
I WASN'T ALLOWED TO MAKE PHONE CALLS FROM PRO-RATA'S TOWER.*

WE'D PROBABLY STILL BE THERE IF SPIDER-MAN HADN'T TOLD THAT COPTER PILOT TO COME BACK FOR US. /haha/

HE HAD ME CHAINED UP THERE FOR A MONTH-- EVER SINCE I ANSWERED HIS AD FOR AN ARTIST'S MODEL AND FELL INTO HIS CLUTCHES.

WHAT'S SO FUNNY?

BLESS OUR PAD



*THE LOOK ON THE PILOT'S FACE WHEN HE SAW YOU... AND YOU SPOKE TO HIM,

"THAT FLIGHT WAS MORE DANGEROUS THAN PRO-RATA AND ALL HIS MONSTERS PUT TOGETHER!"



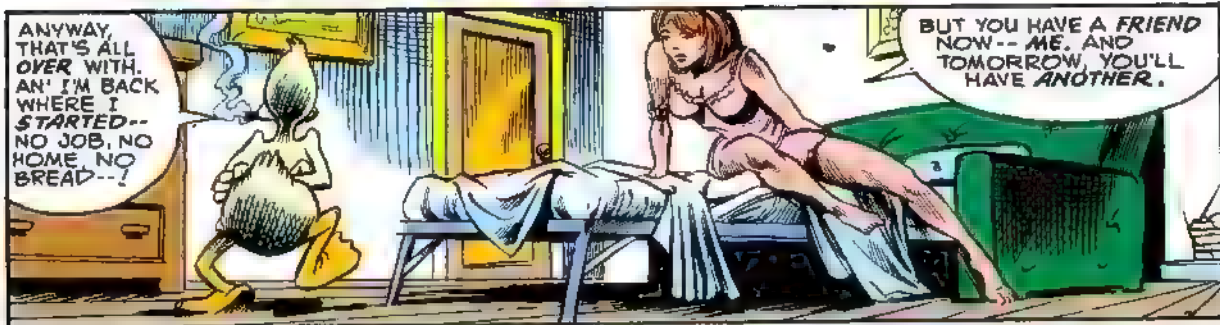
LEMME SAY IT FOR YOU, HUH? "Y-YOU'RE A DUCK!"

HEY, YA JERK! KEEP YER EYES ON THE ROAD--

--AN' OFF MY FEATHERS, HUH?

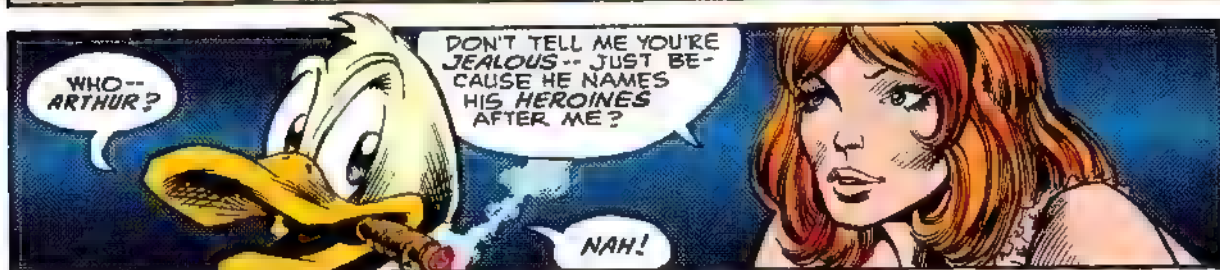
B-BUT...!

B-BUT AREN'T YOU?



ANYWAY, THAT'S ALL OVER WITH. AN' I'M BACK WHERE I STARTED-- NO JOB, NO HOME, NO BREAD--!

BUT YOU HAVE A FRIEND NOW-- ME. AND TOMORROW, YOU'LL HAVE ANOTHER.



WHO-- ARTHUR?

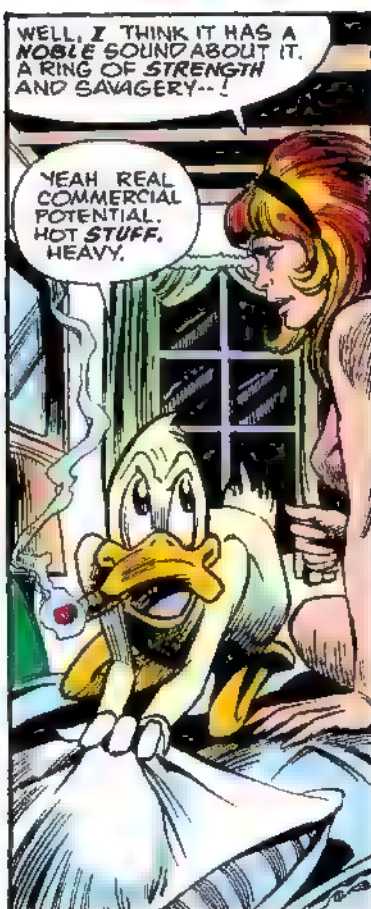
DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE JEALOUS-- JUST BECAUSE HE NAMES HIS HEROINES AFTER ME?

NAH!



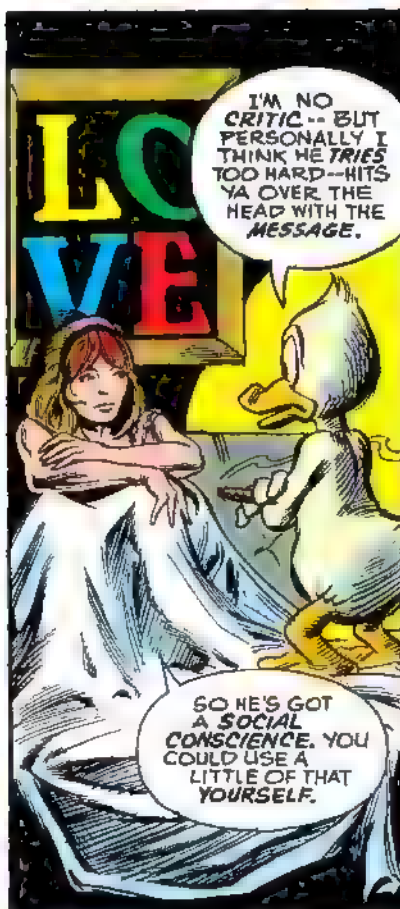
WHAT IS IT, THEN-- THE HERO'S NAME? DON'T YOU LIKE "KILLMALLARD"?

Aaah... I GUESS IT'S JUST TOO EASY FOR ME TO IDENTIFY WITH.



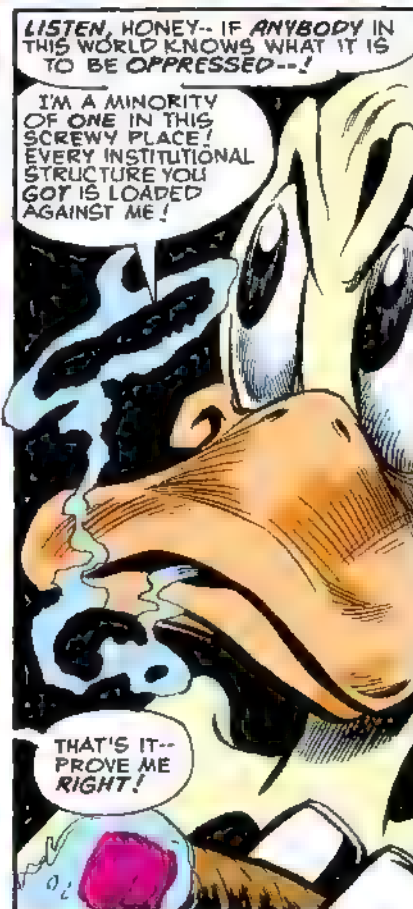
WELL, I THINK IT HAS A NOBLE SOUND ABOUT IT. A RING OF STRENGTH AND SAVAGERY--!

YEAH REAL COMMERCIAL POTENTIAL. HOT STUFF, HEAVY.



I'M NO CRITIC-- BUT PERSONALLY I THINK HE TRIES TOO HARD--HITS YA OVER THE HEAD WITH THE MESSAGE.

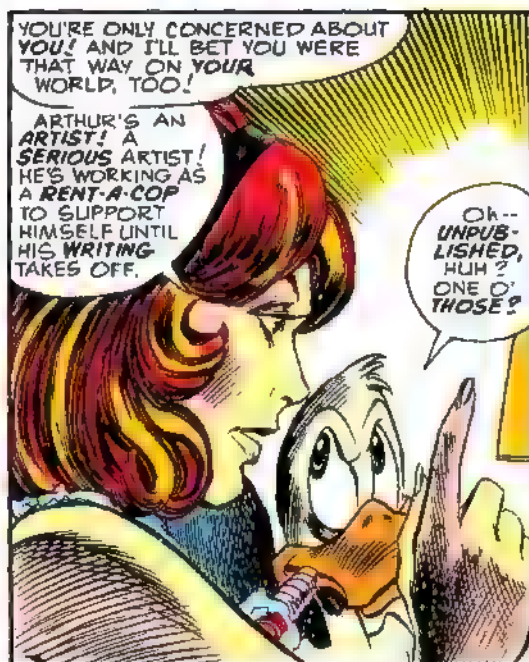
SO HE'S GOT A SOCIAL CONSCIENCE. YOU COULD USE A LITTLE OF THAT YOURSELF.



LISTEN, HONEY-- IF ANYBODY IN THIS WORLD KNOWS WHAT IT IS TO BE OPPRESSED--!

I'M A MINORITY OF ONE IN THIS SCREWY PLACE! EVERY INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE YOU GOT IS LOADED AGAINST ME!

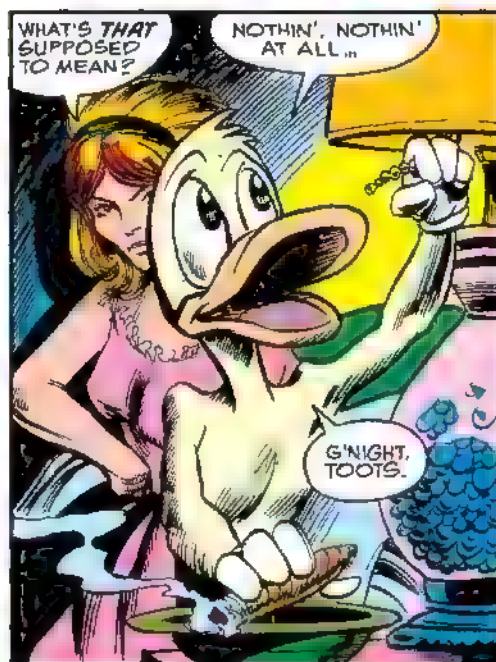
THAT'S IT-- PROVE ME RIGHT!



YOU'RE ONLY CONCERNED ABOUT YOU! AND I'LL BET YOU WERE THAT WAY ON YOUR WORLD, TOO!

ARTHUR'S AN ARTIST! A SERIOUS ARTIST! HE'S WORKING AS A RENT-A-COP TO SUPPORT HIMSELF UNTIL HIS WRITING TAKES OFF.

Oh-- UNPUBLISHED, HUH? ONE O' THOSE?



WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?

NOTHIN'. NOTHIN' AT ALL..

G'NIGHT, TOOTS.



GOOD NIGHT, ARTH-- HOWARD.

AS THE FOWL AND HIS LISSOME FRIEND DRIFT INTO SLUMBER...



...THEIR TOPIC OF CONVERSATION, ONE ARTHUR WINSLOW, FIGHTS TO STAY AWAKE.



YAWN
OH, GAWD...
THREE HOURS
TO GO.

THIS HAS GOT TO BE THE MOST BORING JOB I--



HOLY CRUD!
WHAT--?

FOR SEVEN MONTHS OF EVENTLESS NIGHTS HE'S WAITED FOR THIS MOMENT...



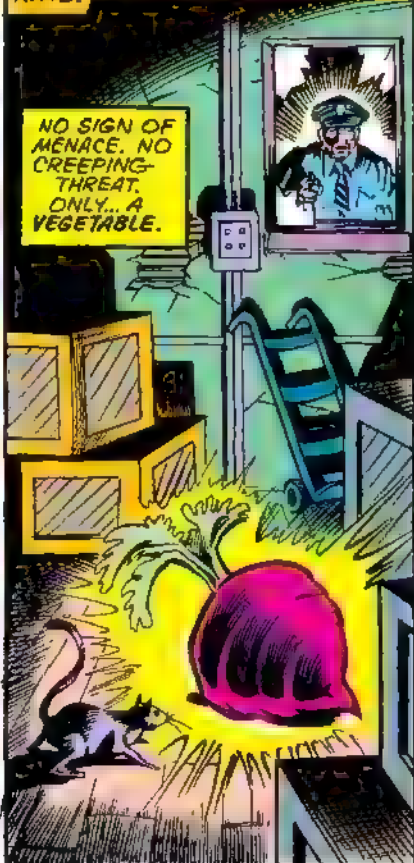
PRAYED
FOR THE
SCENT OF
DANGER!

AND NOW IT'S COME: A CHANCE TO STAND IN THE PRESENCE OF THE UNKNOWN...



...AND TO FACE IT UNAFRAID, AS DO HIS FICTIONAL ALTER EGOS!

BUT-- NOTHING, NO MOVEMENT WITHIN, SAVE FOR THAT OF THE RATS.



NO SIGN OF MENACE. NO CREEPING-THREAT. ONLY... A VEGETABLE.

BUT IT'S A BIG VEGETABLE. AND IT GLOWS. AND IT'S THE CLOSEST THING TO EXCITEMENT THIS JOB HAS OFFERED YET.



SO HE DECIDES TO INVESTIGATE.

CHANCES ARE
IT ISN'T REALLY
DANGEROUS.

IT'S ONLY A TURNIP,
AFTER ALL -- EVEN
IF IT IS THE SIZE OF
A BASKETBALL.

AND WHAT EARTHLY
HARM COULD A
TURNIP DO TO
ANYONE?

ANSWER: NO
EARTHLY HARM,
BUT THEN, THIS
ISN'T AN EARTHLY
TURNIP.

THIS TURNIP
CAME FROM
OUTER SPACE--
AND IT WAS THE
SIZE OF A HOUSE
BEFORE AIR-
FRICTION
WHITTLED
IT DOWN...

BEFORE IT
CAME HURLING
DOWN FROM
THE SKY AND
THROUGH THE
WAREHOUSE
WINDOW...

... BEFORE ITS POWERFUL, BUT DYING,
INTELLIGENCE FORCE CAPTURED THE
MIND AND SOUL OF ARTHUR WINSLOW.

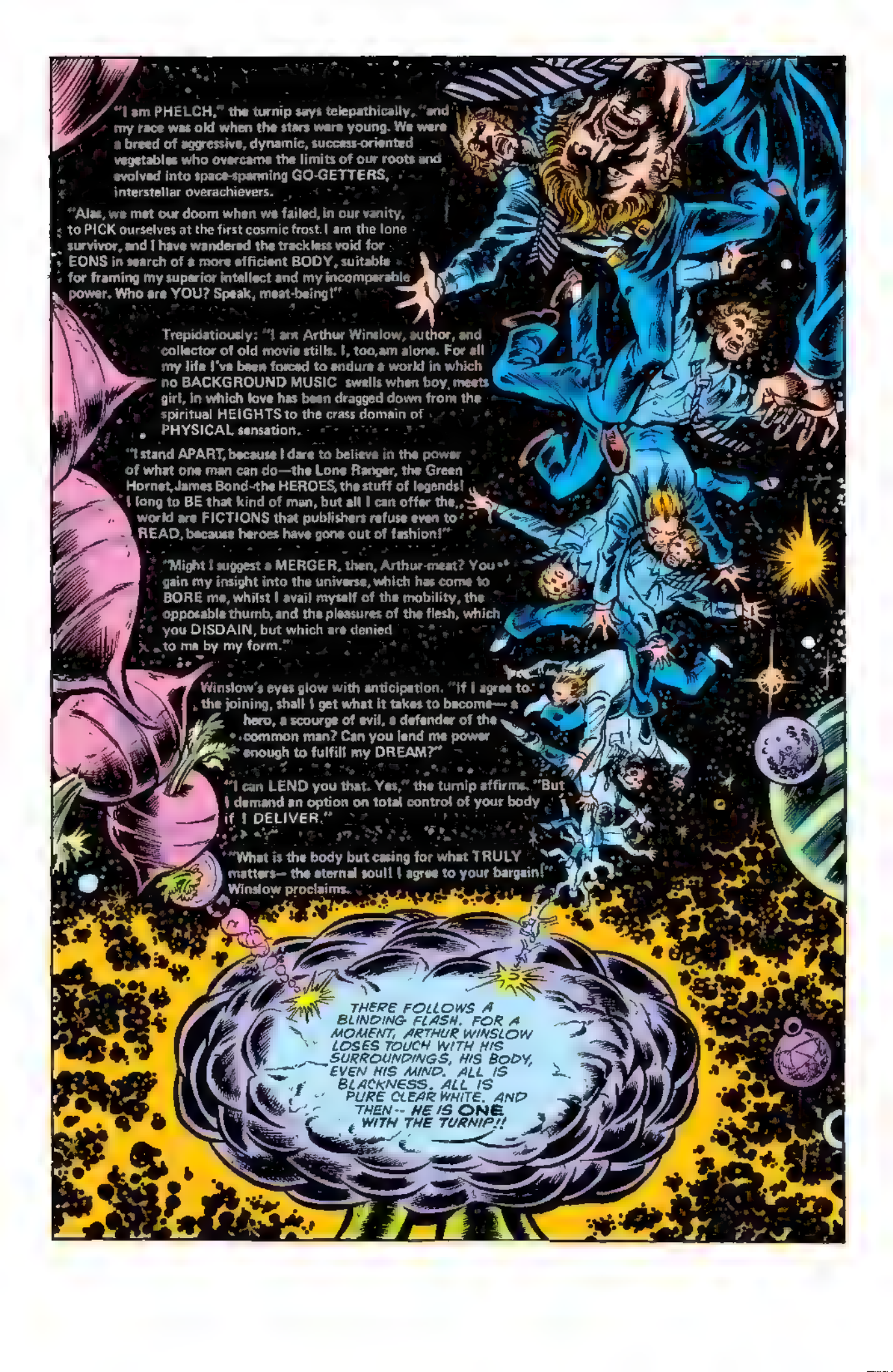
YES...
YES...
NO!...
WELL,
MAYBE...!

ALMOST AT ONCE, A SINISTER SYMBIOSIS IS ESTABLISHED,
AND ARTHUR'S MIND IS EXTENDED ACROSS A UNIVERSE...!

IN A SINGLE
FLEETING-
MOMENT, THE
BELIEFS OF A
LIFETIME ARE
CONFIRMED.

THE COSMOS
IS... AS HE
ALWAYS
THOUGHT
IT WAS.

IT MUST BE. WOULD A STAR-
SPAWNED TURNIP LIE??



"I am PHELCH," the turnip says telepathically, "and my race was old when the stars were young. We were a breed of aggressive, dynamic, success-oriented vegetables who overcame the limits of our roots and evolved into space-spanning GO-GETTERS, interstellar overachievers."

"Alas, we met our doom when we failed, in our vanity, to PICK ourselves at the first cosmic frost. I am the lone survivor, and I have wandered the trackless void for EONS in search of a more efficient BODY, suitable for framing my superior intellect and my incomparable power. Who are YOU? Speak, meat-being!"

Trepidatiously: "I am Arthur Winslow, author, and collector of old movie stills. I, too, am alone. For all my life I've been forced to endure a world in which no BACKGROUND MUSIC swells when boy meets girl, in which love has been dragged down from the spiritual HEIGHTS to the crass domain of PHYSICAL sensation."

"I stand APART, because I dare to believe in the power of what one man can do—the Lone Ranger, the Green Hornet, James Bond—the HEROES, the stuff of legends! I long to BE that kind of man, but all I can offer the world are FICTIONS that publishers refuse even to READ, because heroes have gone out of fashion!"

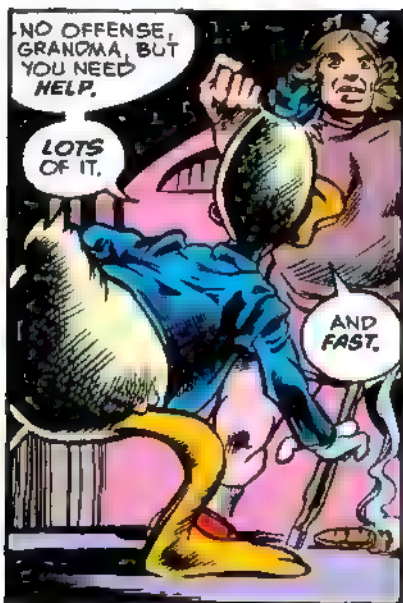
"Might I suggest a MERGER, then, Arthur-meat? You gain my insight into the universe, which has come to BORE me, whilst I avail myself of the mobility, the opposable thumb, and the pleasures of the flesh, which you DISDAIN, but which are denied to me by my form."

Winslow's eyes glow with anticipation. "If I agree to the joining, shall I get what it takes to become—a hero, a scourge of evil, a defender of the common man? Can you lend me power enough to fulfill my DREAM?"

"I can LEND you that. Yes," the turnip affirms. "But I demand an option on total control of your body if I DELIVER."

"What is the body but casing for what TRULY matters—the eternal soul! I agree to your bargain!" Winslow proclaims.

THERE FOLLOWS A BLINDING FLASH. FOR A MOMENT, ARTHUR WINSLOW LOSES TOUCH WITH HIS SURROUNDINGS, HIS BODY, EVEN HIS MIND. ALL IS BLACKNESS. ALL IS PURE CLEAR WHITE. AND THEN-- HE IS ONE WITH THE TURNIP!!



NO OFFENSE, GRANDMA, BUT YOU NEED HELP.

LOTS OF IT.

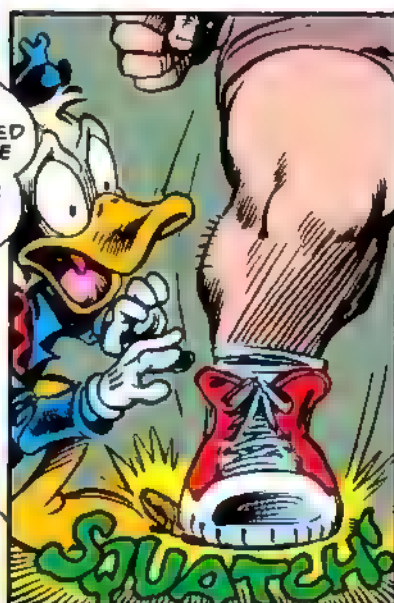
AND FAST.



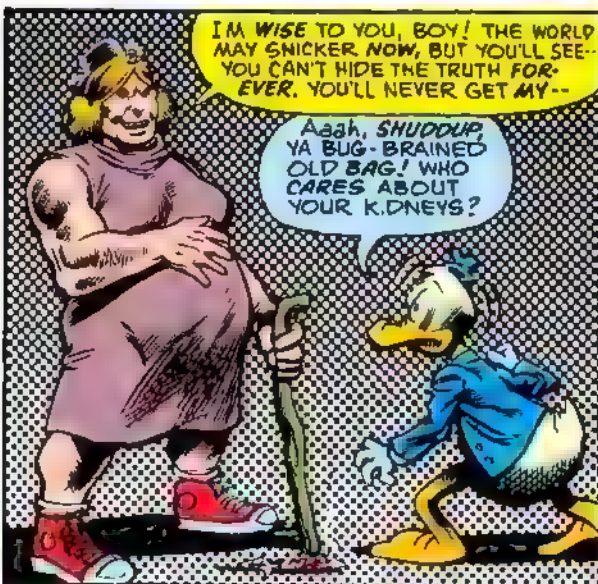
OH THAT'S SO TYPICAL OF YOUR KIND! MOCKING-ME, BECAUSE I CAN'T FIND ALLIES!

YOU'RE SO SECURE IN YOUR ZEALOUSLY-GUARDED SECRECY--SO SURE JOHN Q. PUBLIC WON'T BELIEVE IN THE THREAT TO HIS KIDNEYS.

WELL, I'LL SHOW YOU!

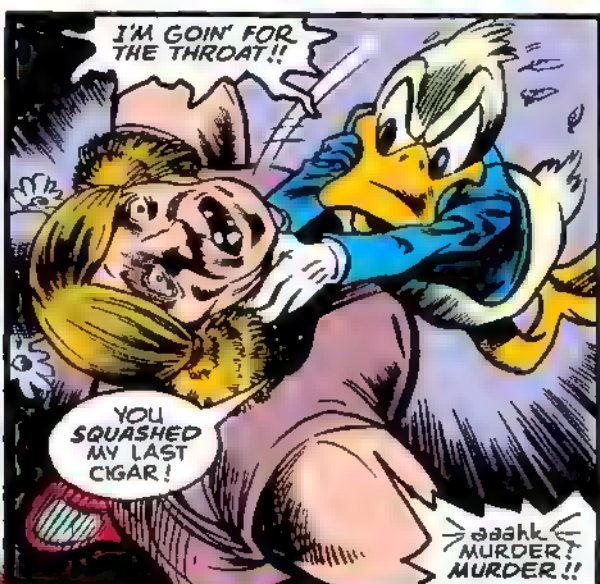


SQUATCHE!



I'M WISE TO YOU, BOY! THE WORLD MAY SNICKER NOW, BUT YOU'LL SEE--YOU CAN'T HIDE THE TRUTH FOREVER. YOU'LL NEVER GET MY--

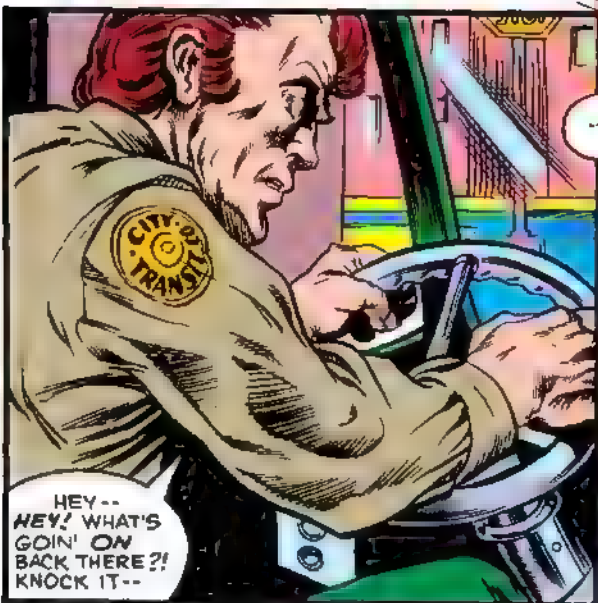
Aaah, SHUDDUP YA BUG-BRAINED OLD BAG! WHO CARES ABOUT YOUR KIDNEYS?



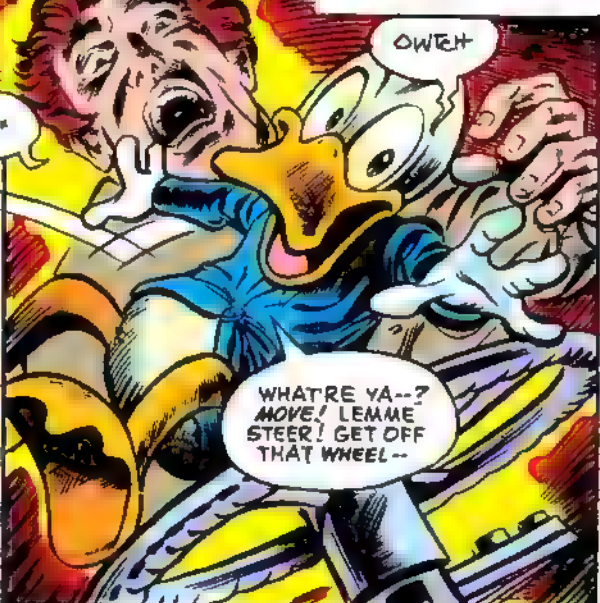
I'M GOIN' FOR THE THROAT!!

YOU SQUASHED MY LAST CIGAR!

Aaah! MURDER!!



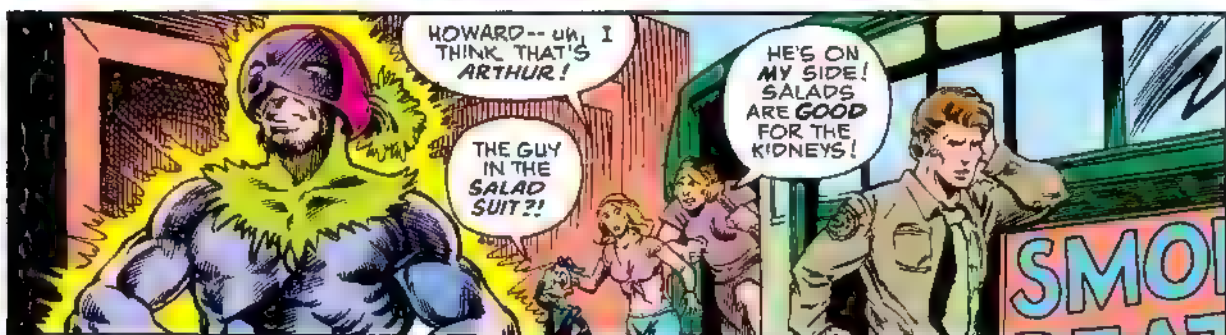
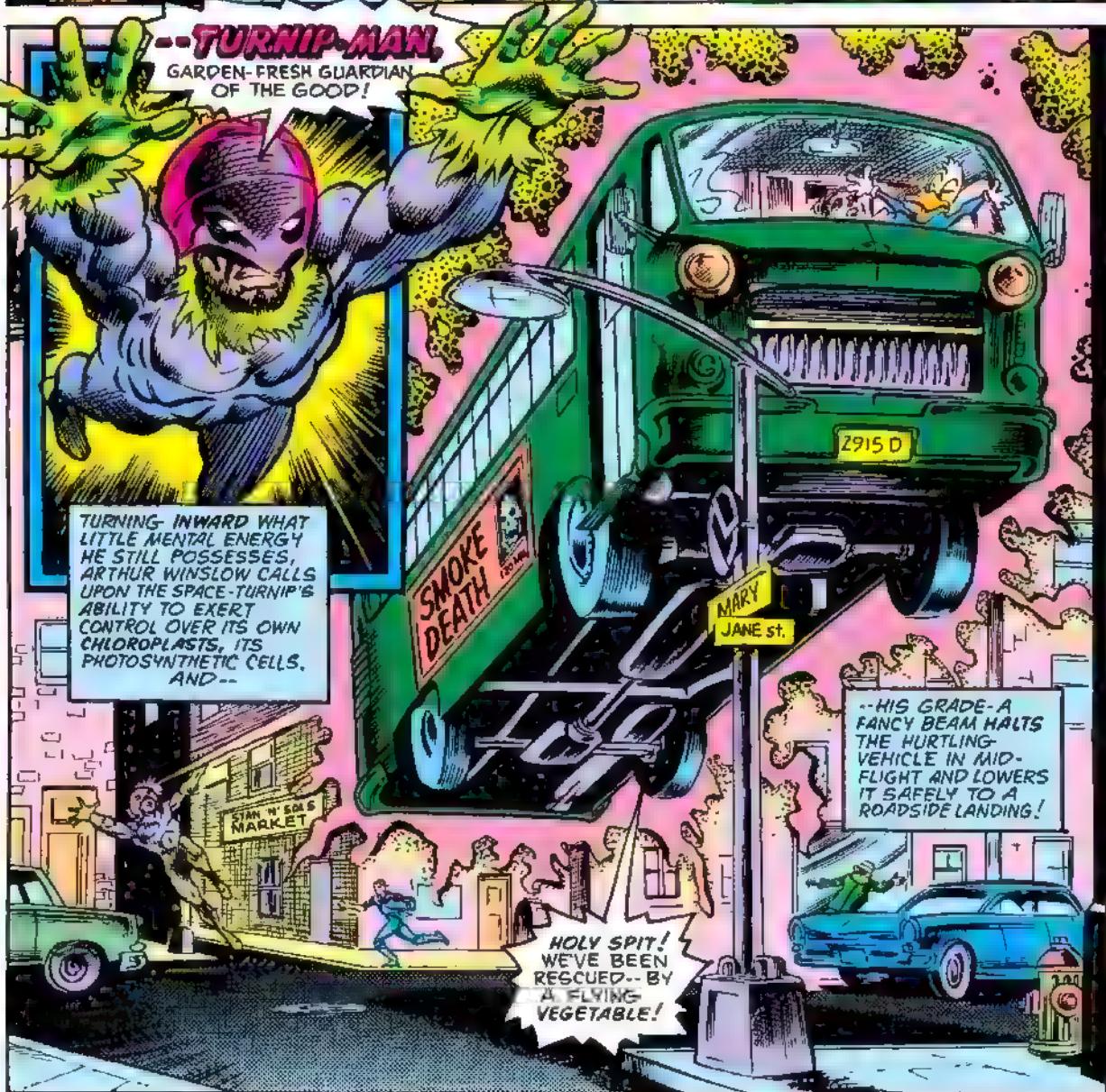
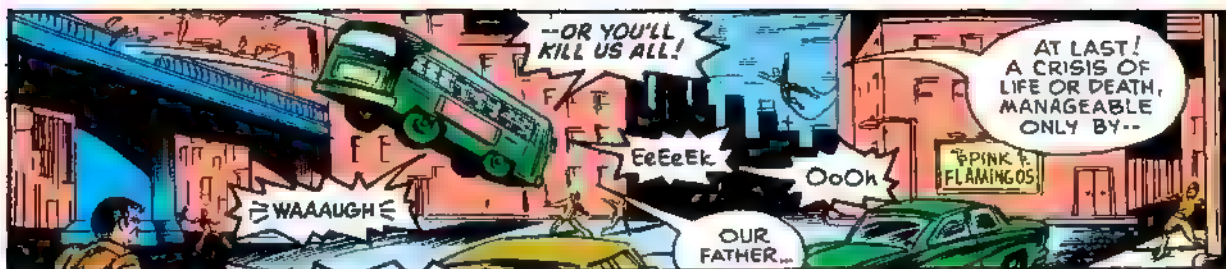
HEY-- HEY! WHAT'S GOIN' ON BACK THERE?! KNOCK IT--

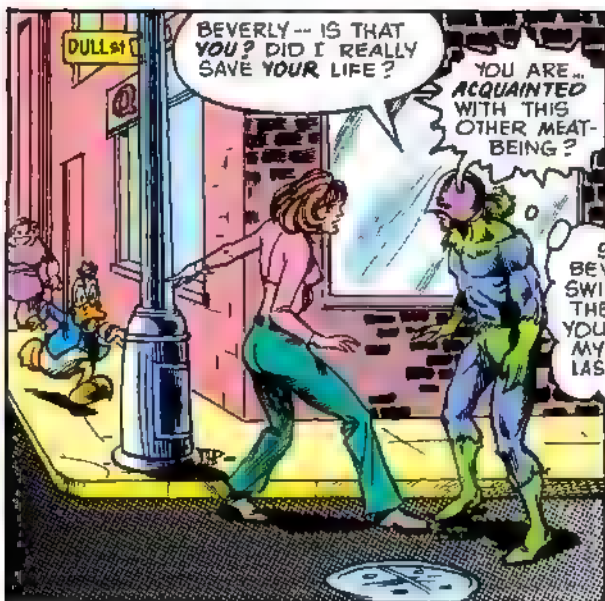


OWIEH

--OFF

WHATRE YA--? MOVE! LEMME STEER! GET OFF THAT WHEEL--

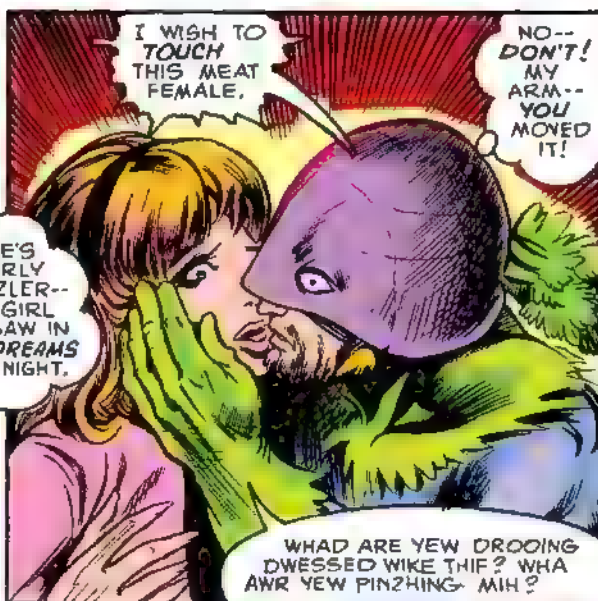




BEVERLY-- IS THAT YOU? DID I REALLY SAVE YOUR LIFE?

YOU ARE... ACQUAINTED WITH THIS OTHER MEAT-BEING?

SHE'S BEVERLY SWITZLER-- THE GIRL YOU SAW IN MY DREAMS LAST NIGHT.



I WISH TO TOUCH THIS MEAT FEMALE.

NO-- DON'T! MY ARM-- YOU MOVED IT!

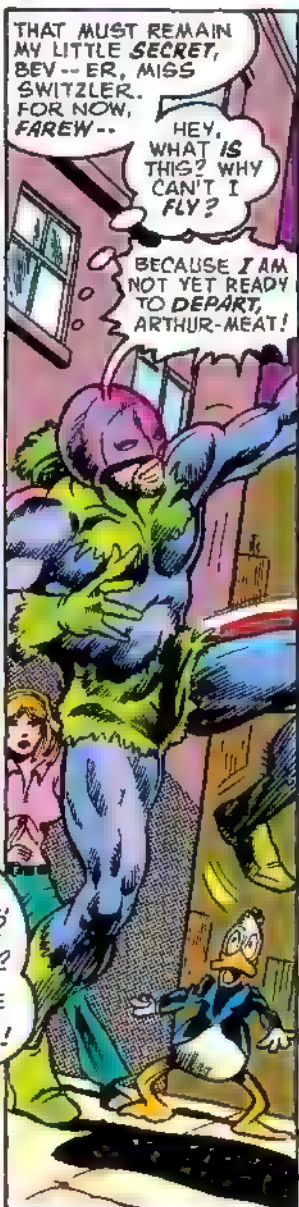
WHAD ARE YEW DROOING DWESSED WIKE THIF? WHA AWR YEW PINZHING MIH?



I'M NOT JUST PLAIN ARTHUR WINSLOW ANY LONGER, BEV. I'M LEADING A DOUBLE LIFE NOW.

SO I'D APPRECIATE IT IF YOU'D CALL ME TURNIP-MAN WHEN I'M IN UNIFORM.

BUT, ARTHUR, HOW DID YOU GET THIS WAY? THESE STRANGE NEW POWERS--!



THAT MUST REMAIN MY LITTLE SECRET, BEV-- ER, MISS SWITZLER. FOR NOW, FAREW--

HEY, WHAT IS THIS? WHY CAN'T I FLY?

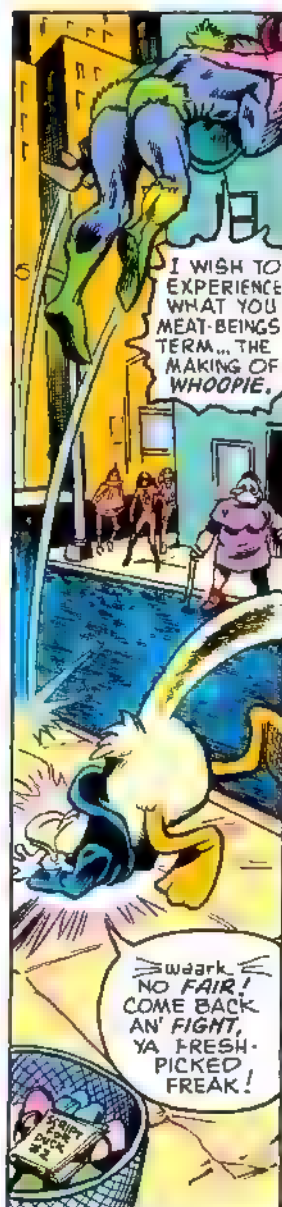
BECAUSE I AM NOT YET READY TO DEPART, ARTHUR-MEAT!



SHORTLY, YOU'LL BE UNABLE TO DO ANYTHING WITHOUT MY PERMISSION.

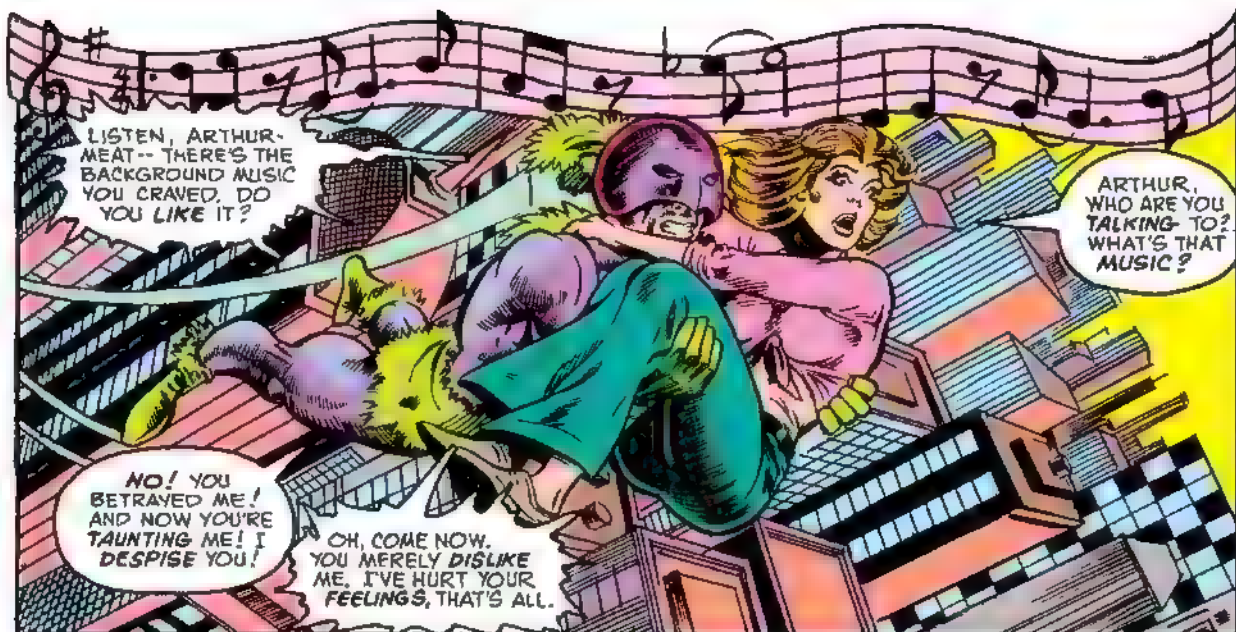
I TOLD YOU-- I WANTED ALL OF YOU--AND MY ADVANCED INTELLECT IS TAKING IT, BIT BY BIT!

HEY, WAITAMINIT, BUB! TAKE YER GLEAZY LEAVES OFF HER!



I WISH TO EXPERIENCE WHAT YOU MEAT-BEINGS TERM... THE MAKING OF WHOOPIE.

SWARK! NO FAIR! COME BACK AN' FIGHT, YA FRESH-PICKED FREAK!



LISTEN, ARTHUR-MEAT-- THERE'S THE BACKGROUND MUSIC YOU CRAVED. DO YOU LIKE IT?

ARTHUR, WHO ARE YOU TALKING TO? WHAT'S THAT MUSIC?

NO! YOU BETRAYED ME! AND NOW YOU'RE TAUNTING ME! I DESPISE YOU!

OH, COME NOW. YOU MERELY DISLIKE ME. I'VE HURT YOUR FEELINGS, THAT'S ALL.



DON'T YOU SEE-- IT'S YOUR PREDILECTION FOR MELODRAMATIC ABSOLUTES THAT'S MADE YOUR SILLY LIFE SUCH TORTURE ALL THESE YEARS?

HERE, ARTHUR-MEAT-- LET'S COME IN FOR A LANDING.

ARTHUR, THAT'S THE JAMES BOND THEME--!



THERE ARE NO HEROES, ARTHUR-MEAT-- NOR VILLAINS, EITHER. MERELY VARIOUS ENTITIES WITH VARIOUS DESIRES.

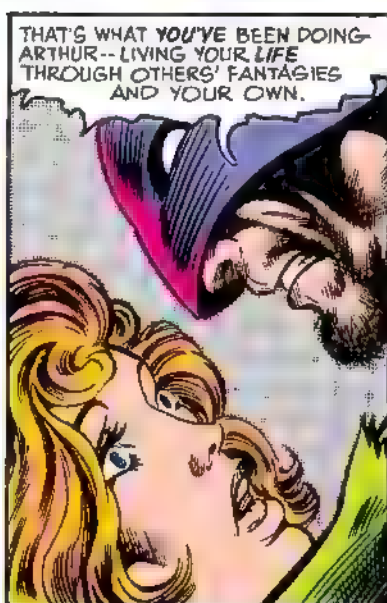
WHEN SOCIETY APPROVES OF THESE DESIRES, THE ENTITY IS DEEMED GOOD-- OR AT LEAST RESPECTABLE.

NO! IT'S A LIE!



WH WHAT ABOUT STORIES WHERE THE HERO IS THE RENEGADE-- THE ANTI-ESTABLISHMENT FIGURE?

ESCAPIST CLAPTRAP, ARTHUR-MEAT-- A SAFETY VALVE FOR THE FRUSTRATIONS OF THE MASSES, ALLOWING THEM TO VENT THEIR HOSTILITIES VICARIOUSLY.

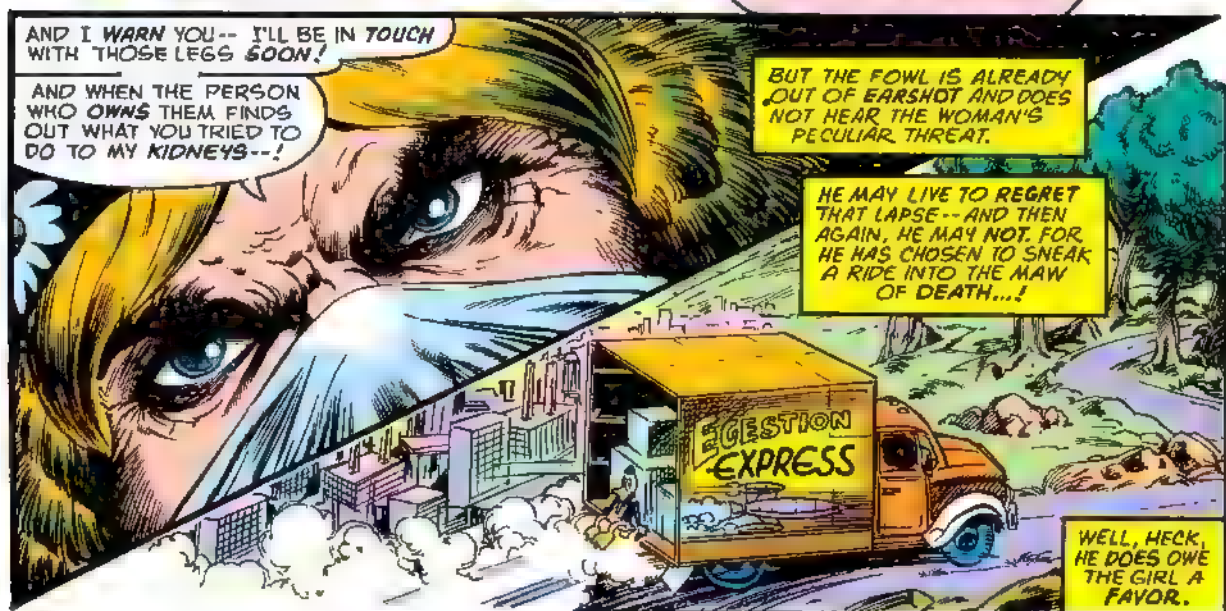
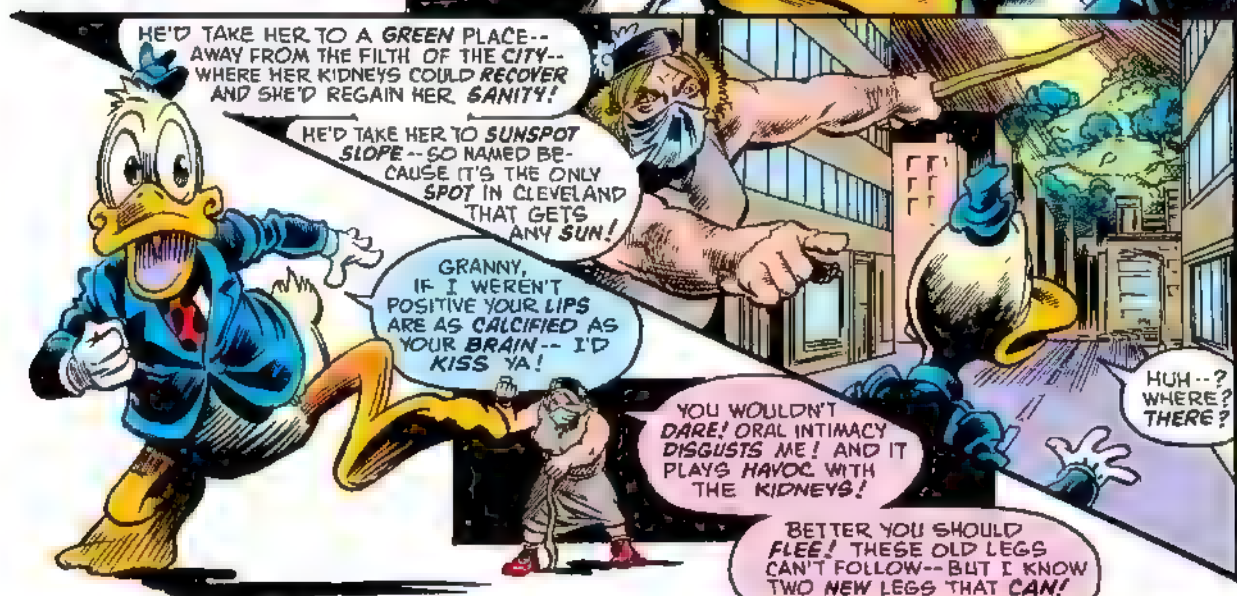


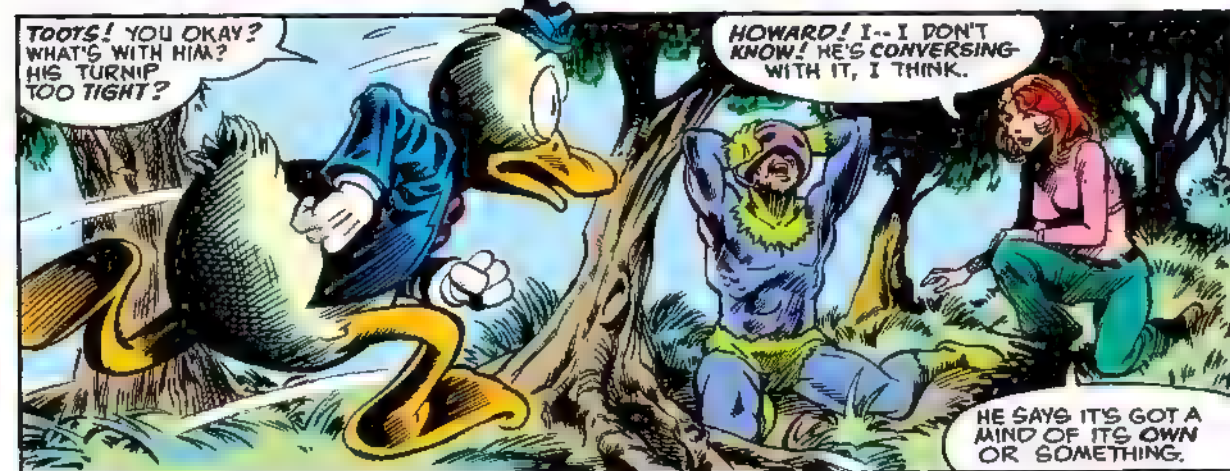
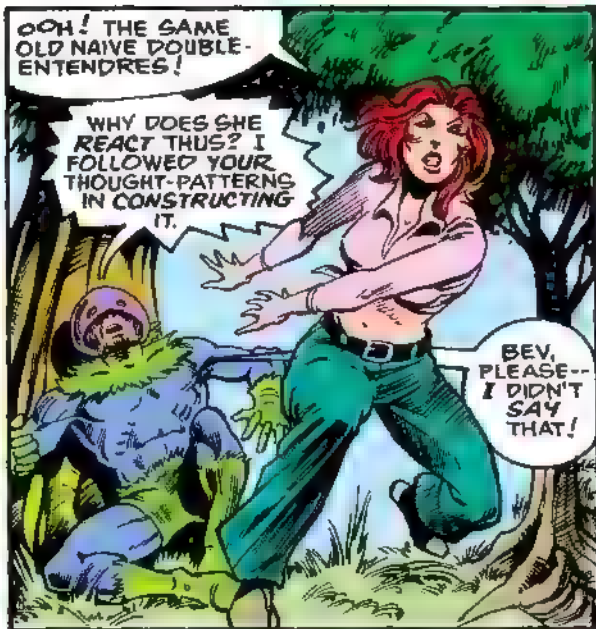
THAT'S WHAT YOU'VE BEEN DOING-- LIVING YOUR LIFE THROUGH OTHERS' FANTASIES AND YOUR OWN.

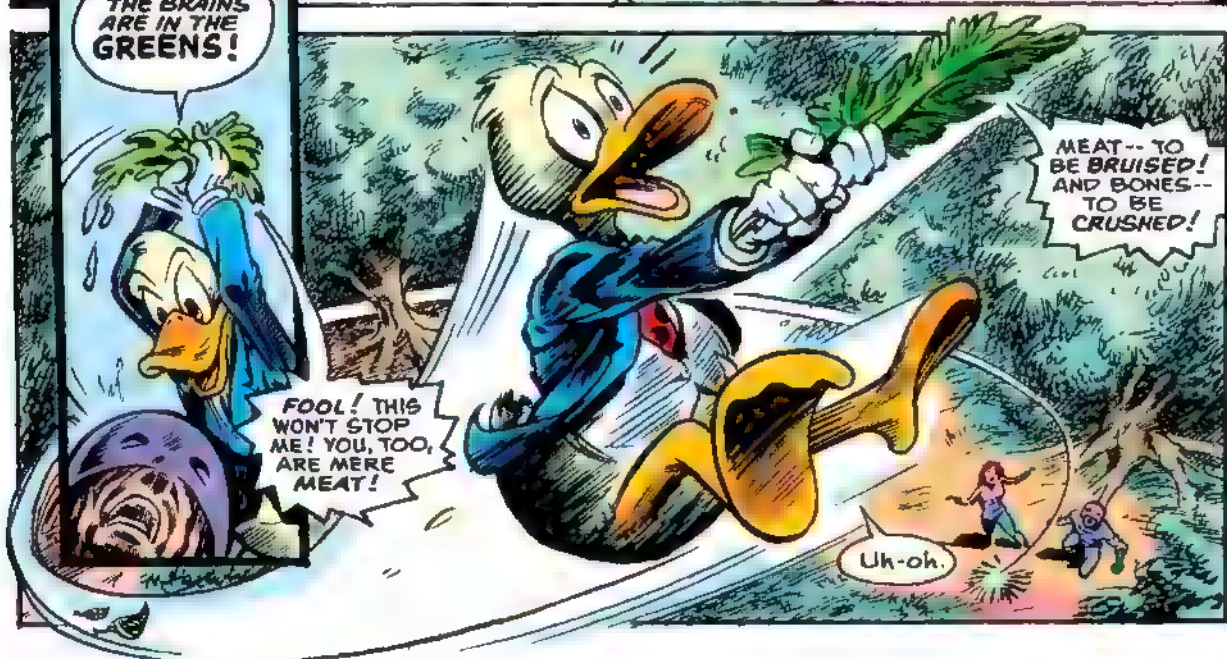
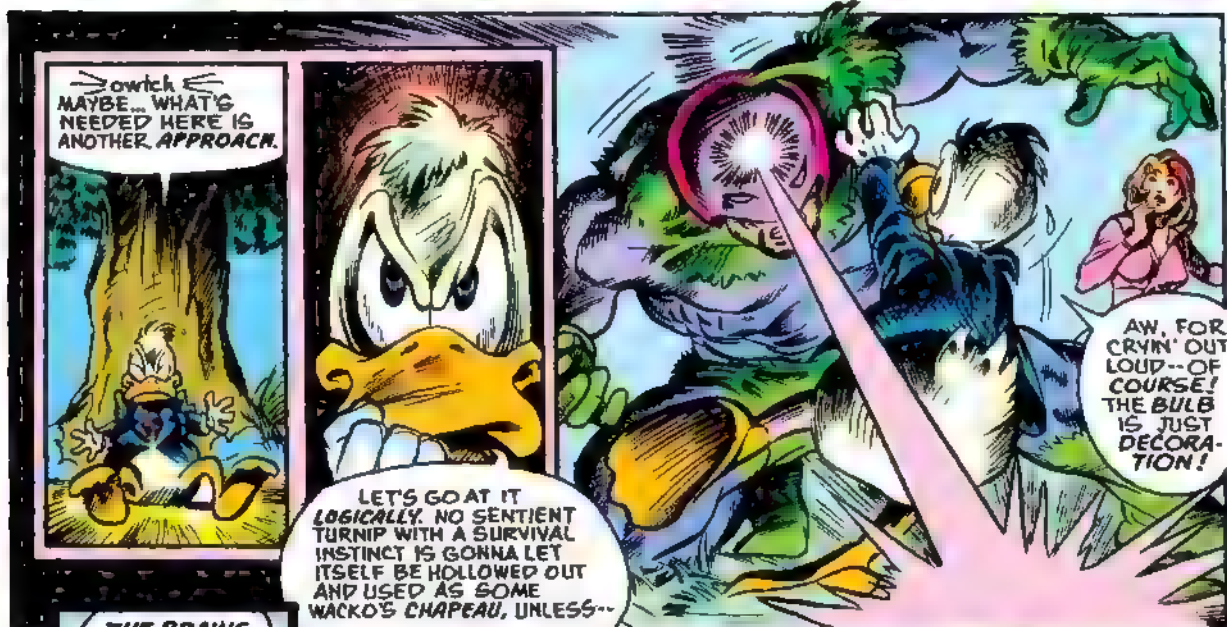
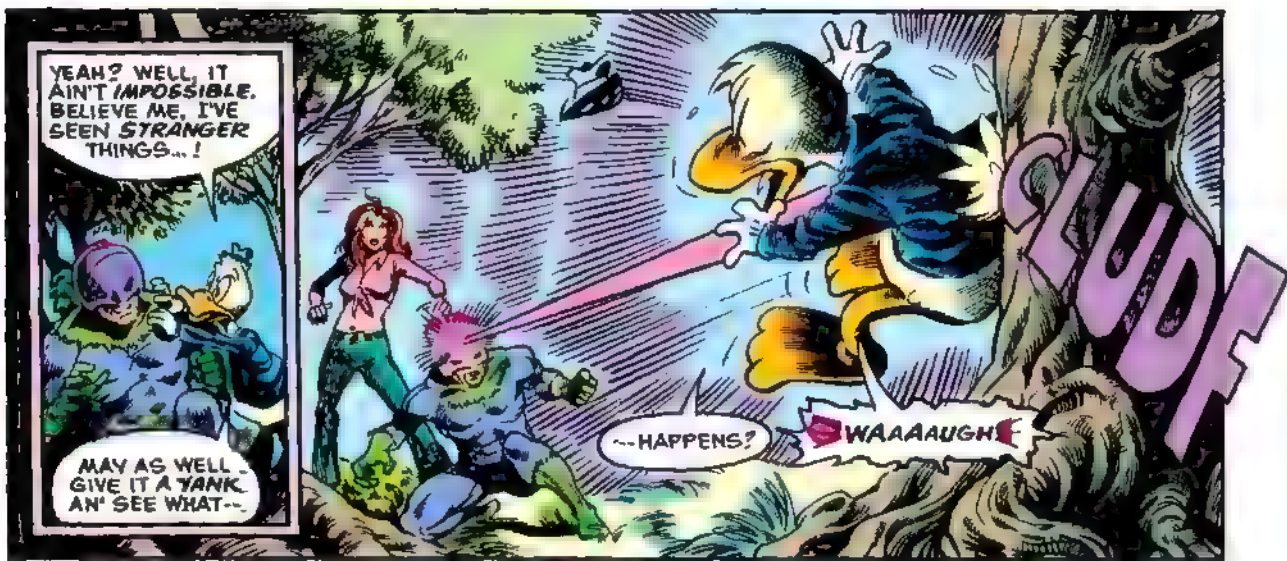


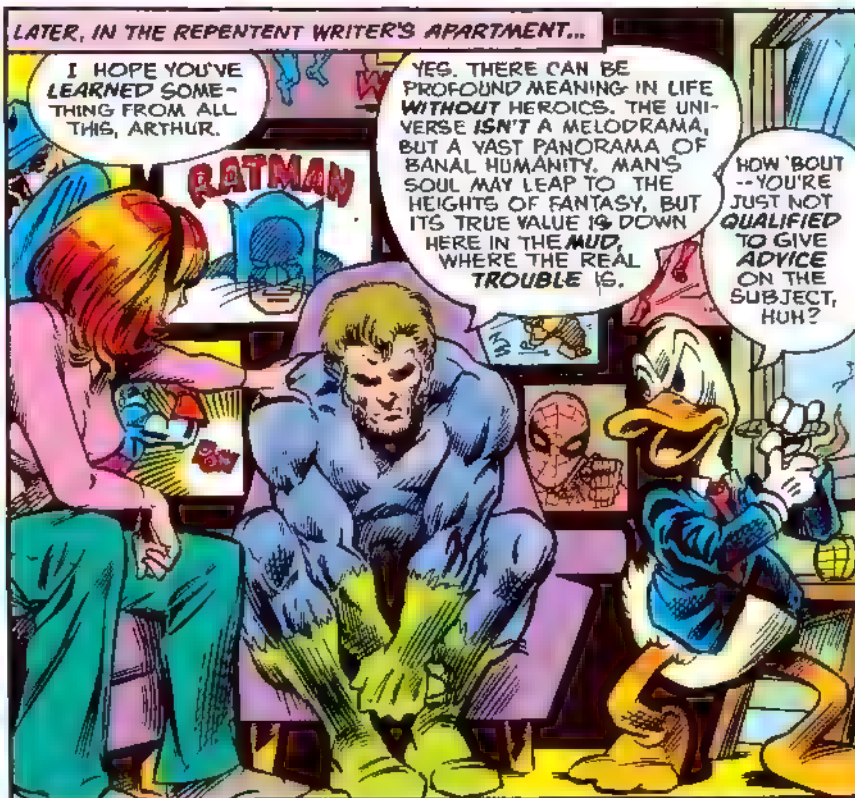
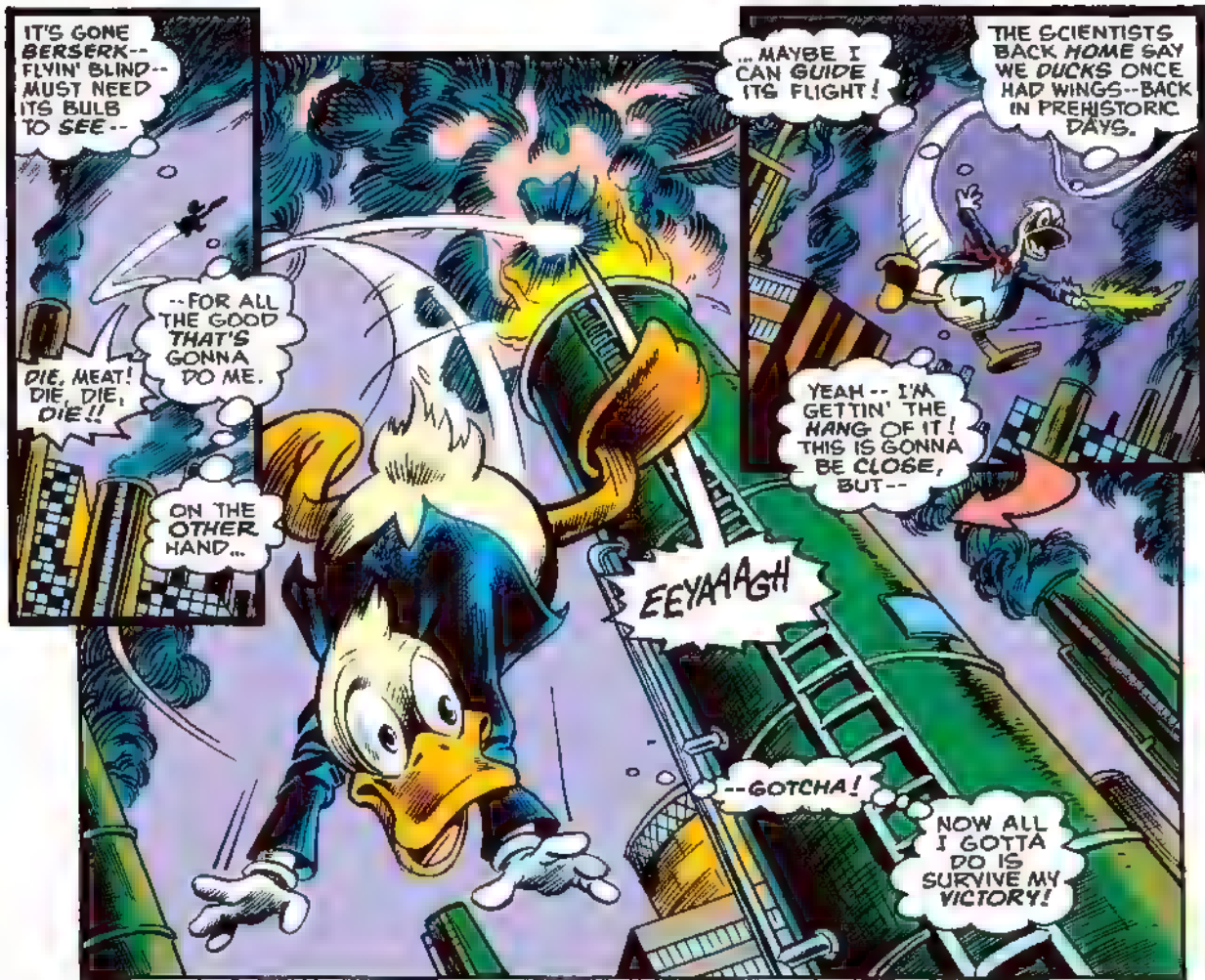
AND IT IS A PITY: NOW THAT YOU'RE IN A POSITION TO EXPERIENCE A REAL SENSATION...

...IT'S I WHO'LL REAP THE BENEFITS.









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TRAPPED IN A WORLD HE NEVER MADE!



HOWARD THE DUCK™

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

**MARTIAL-ARTS MAYHEM AS YOU'VE
NEVER SEEN IT BEFORE--WHEN HOWARD BECOMES**

MASTER OF QUACK FU!

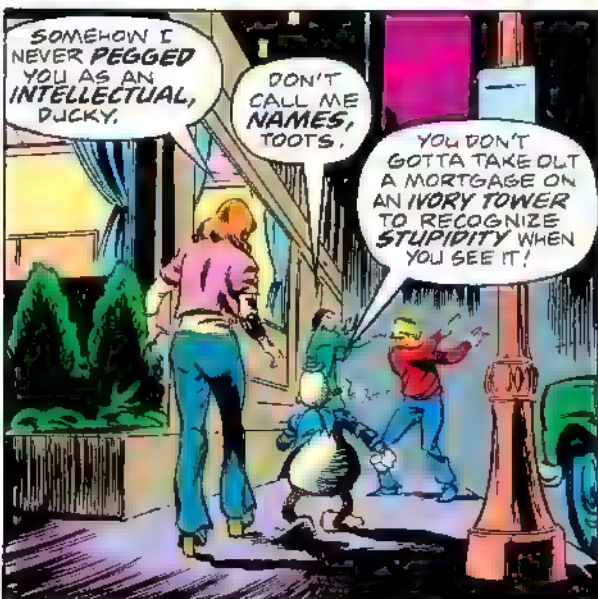
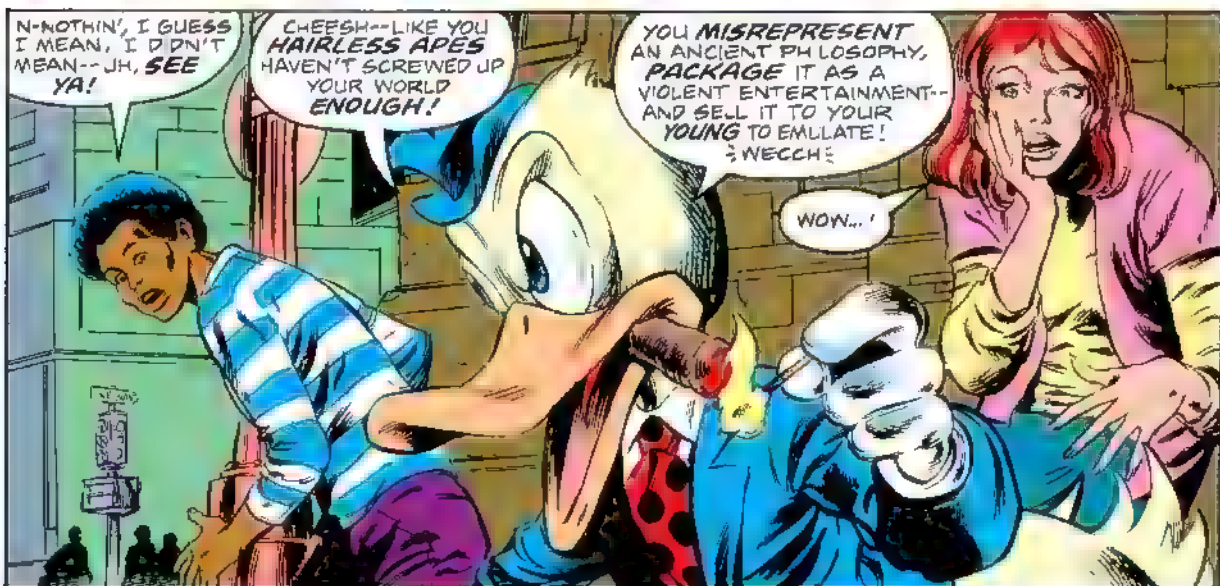
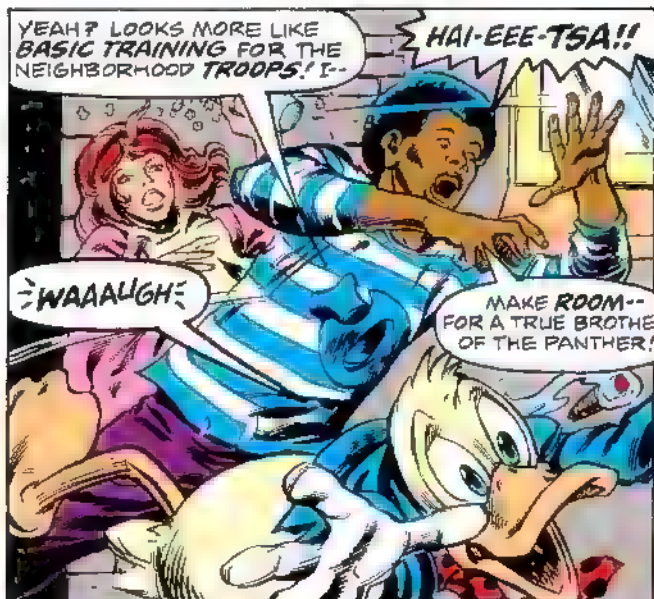


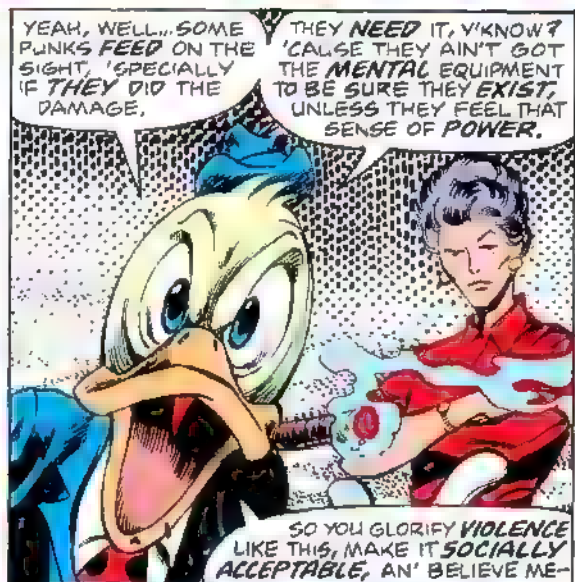
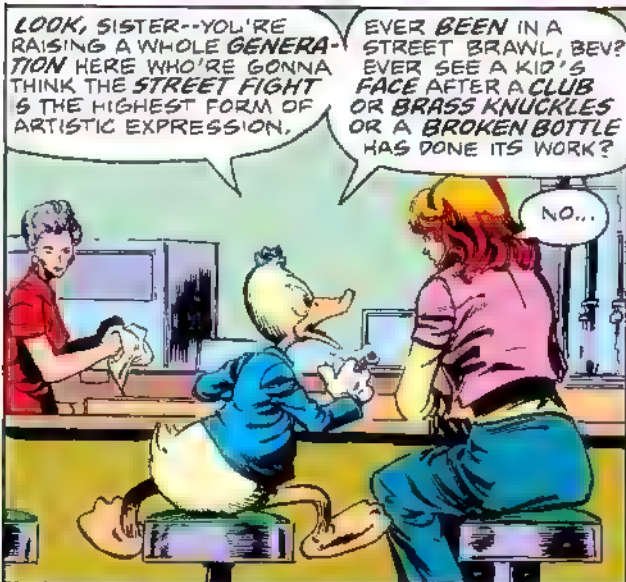
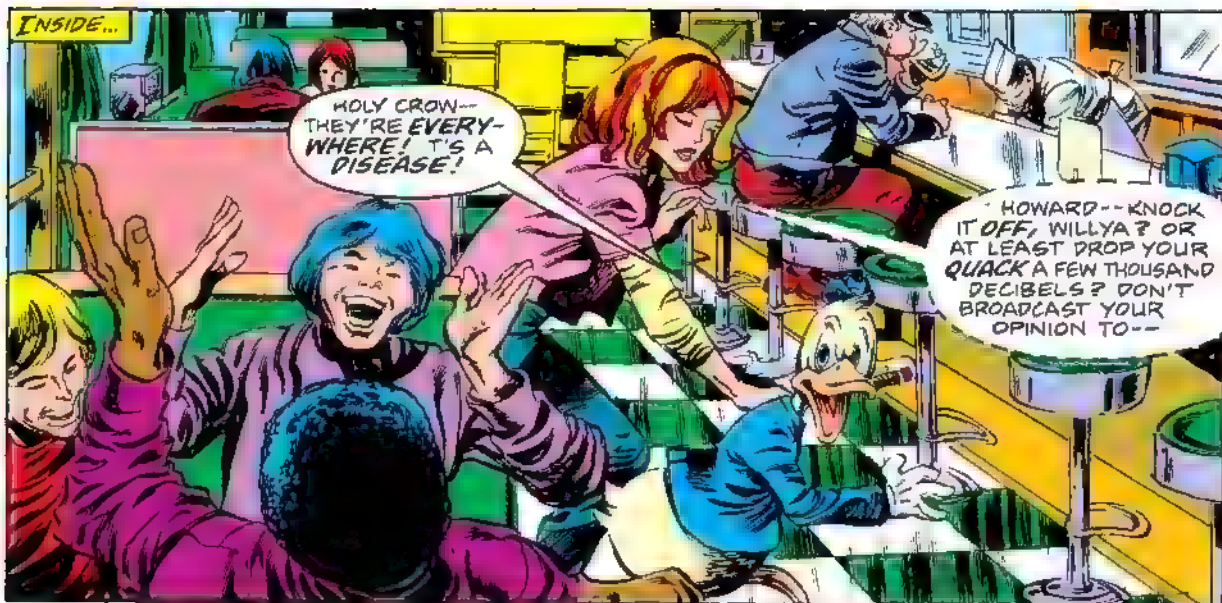
From the time of his hatching, he was different. A potent ally brilliant scholar who dreaded the structured environment of school, he educated himself in the streets, taking whatever work was available, formulating his philosophy of self from what he learned of the world about him. And then the Cosmic Axis shifted...and that world *changed*. Suddenly, he was stranded in a universe he could not fathom. Without warning, he became a strange fowl in an even stranger land.

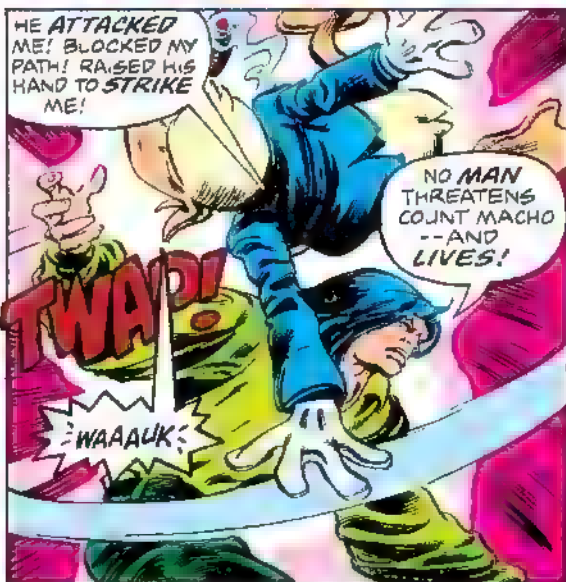
Stan Lee PRESENTS: **HOWARD THE DUCK!** JV210

WRITTEN BY **STEVE GERBER** * ILLUSTRATED BY **JOHN BUSCEMA** * INKED BY **STEVE LEIALOHA** * EDITED BY **MARY WOLFMAN**
ANNETTE KAWECKI, LETTERER MICHELE WOLFMAN, COLORIST









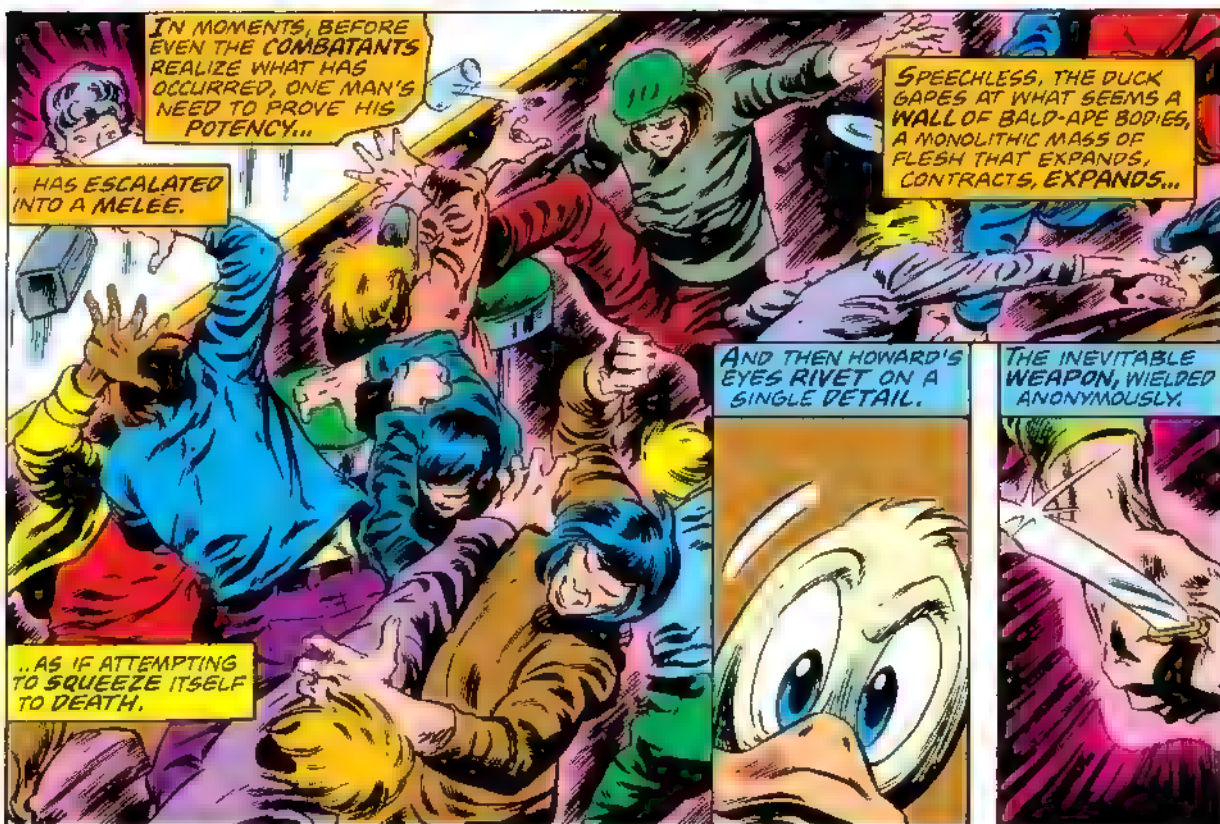


THE YOUNG MAN FALLS-- AND SUDDENLY THE FRACAS IS NO LONGER MERELY AN INCIDENT, BUT A CREATURE, SUCKING, VORACIOUS, WITH A LIFE OF ITS OWN.



ONE BY ONE, OTHERS ARE DRAWN INTO THE FRAY, SPURRED BY A SENSE OF FAIR PLAY, BY FEAR OF DANGER TO THEIR COMPANIONS...

...OR BY THE SHEER JOY THAT SOME PERVERTED SOULS DERIVE FROM PUNCHING ANOTHER HUMAN BEING IN THE FACE.



IN MOMENTS, BEFORE EVEN THE COMBATANTS REALIZE WHAT HAS OCCURRED, ONE MAN'S NEED TO PROVE HIS POTENCY...

...HAS ESCALATED INTO A MELEE.

SPEECHLESS, THE DUCK GAPES AT WHAT SEEMS A WALL OF BALD-APPE BODIES, A MONOLITHIC MASS OF FLESH THAT EXPANDS, CONTRACTS, EXPANDS...

AND THEN HOWARD'S EYES RIVET ON A SINGLE DETAIL.

THE INEVITABLE WEAPON, WIELDED ANONYMOUSLY.

...AS IF ATTEMPTING TO SQUEEZE ITSELF TO DEATH.



A SHRILL TREBLE SLICES THROUGH THE DULL BASS DIN OF THE ROW

A PIERCING CRY OF PAIN. A CRY OF PIERCING PAIN. WHICHEVER

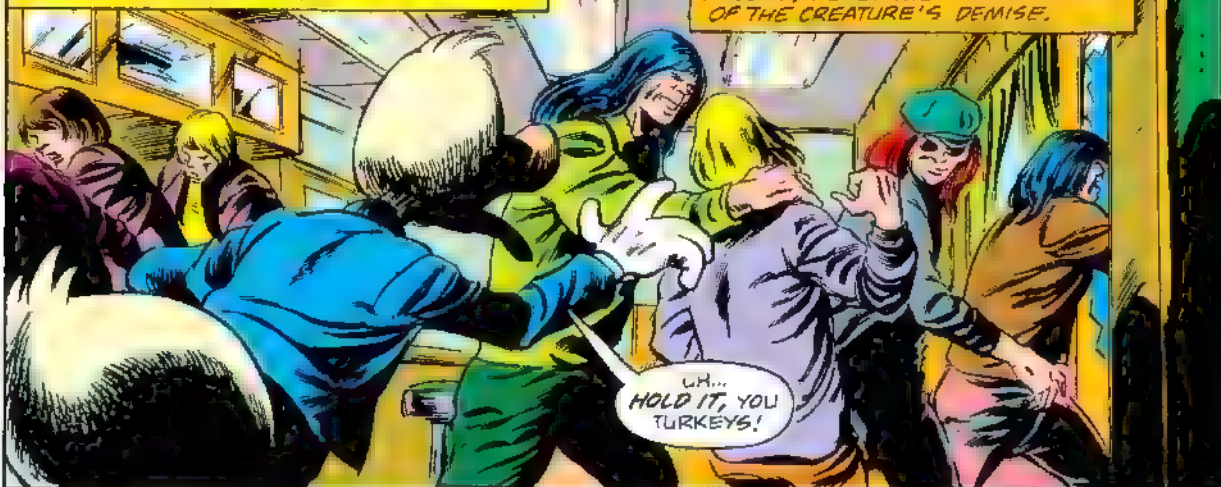


THE BOY'S BRIGHT FACE GOES PALLID. THE STRENGTH DRAINS FROM HIS LEGS.

HE FALLS TO THE COUNTER CLUTCHING AT--BUT IT CAN'T BE!--A HOLE IN HIS BODY?

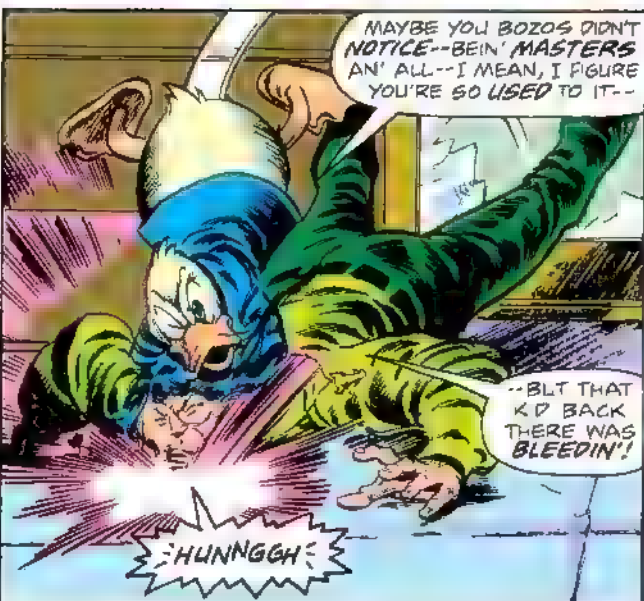
MY GOD--HE'S BEEN STABBED!!

AS SWIFTLY AS IT APPEARED, THE BLADE HAS VANISHED. THE FIGHT-CREATURE DISSOLVES IN PANIC, ITS LIMBS DETACH AND GO THEIR SEPARATE WAYS.



AND CERTAIN OF THOSE LIMBS SEEM INORDINATELY CONTENTED, EVEN JOGUNG, ABOUT THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE CREATURE'S DEMISE.

UH... HOLD IT, YOU TURKEYS!



MAYBE YOU BOZOS DIDN'T NOTICE--BEIN' MASTERS AN' ALL--I MEAN, I FIGURE YOU'RE SO USED TO IT--

--BUT THAT K'D BACK THERE WAS BLEEDIN'!

HUNNGGH



AND, SEE, MUCH AS I HATE TA POKE MY BEAK INTA THINGS LIKE THIS, I--

WEE-AALIGH

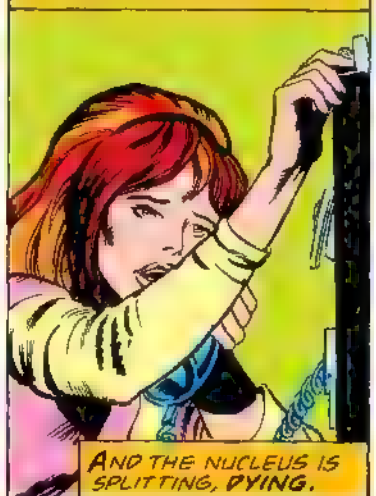
HAI-EE!

OFF ME! INSULATE WHAT YOU PLEASE--BUT KNOW YOU DO SO IN PER L OF YOUR LIFE!

WHILE THE WATERFOWL LIES SPRAWLED ON THE PAVEMENT, MACHO ESCAPES. AND INSIDE THE DINER...



BUT THE VALENCES ARE ALL WRONG--NO COHESION-- THE ELECTRONS COLLIDE, HAMPER ONE ANOTHER'S MOVEMENT.



IN ALL THE FLURRY OF ACTIVITY, TWO WORDS HAVE GONE UNSPOKEN:



SHE PRAYS THEY ARRIVE IN TIME TO SAVE THE BOY FROM THE CROWD'S ATTEMPTS TO HELP HIM.

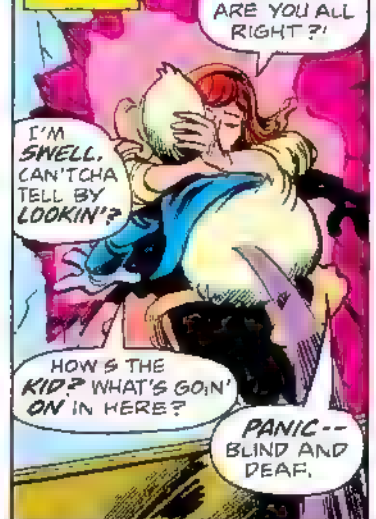
AND WHILE SHE WAITS, A COLD, CLAMMY SWEAT BEADS ON HER PALMS.



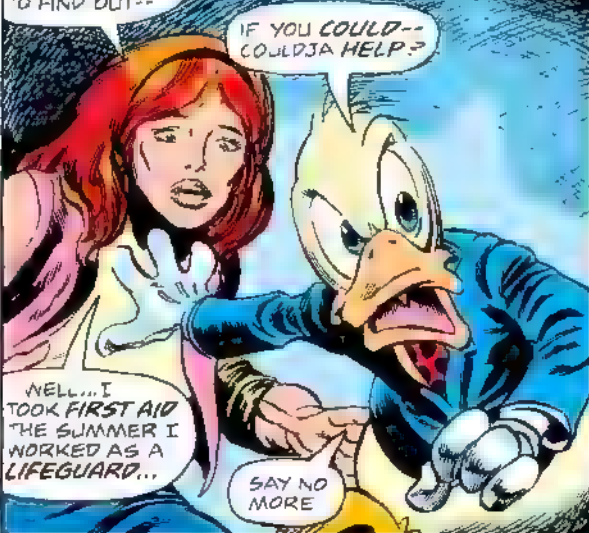
HE FOLLOWED COUNT MACHO OUT THE WINDOW, SHE REMEMBERS.



BUT NO.



I CAN'T GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO FIND OUT--



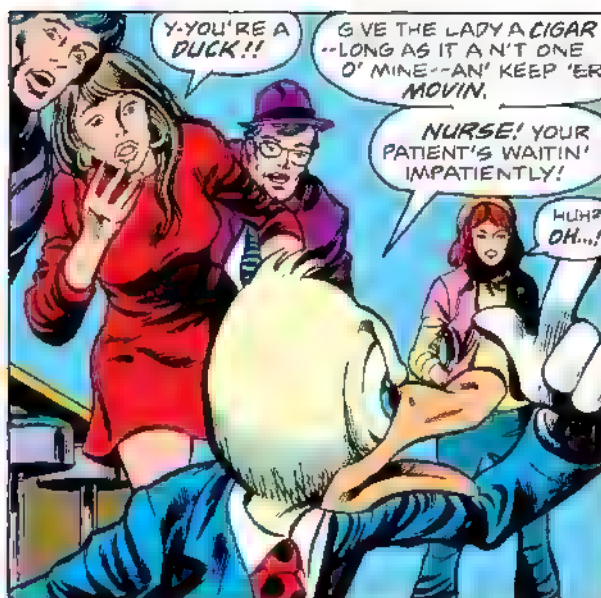
JUST LEAVE IT TO ME. THE WORST WE CAN DO IS KEEP 'EM FROM SUFFOCATIN' THE POOR GUY!





SHARP, SPINDLY ELBOWS PUSHING, PRODDING, POKING PAST KNEES AND THIGHS, HOWARD REACHES THE CENTER OF THE MOB...!

I'M ONLY GONNA SAY THIS ONCE: BACK OFF! YOU ARE ALL BEHAVING ABOMINABLY!



Y-YOU'RE A DUCK!!

GIVE THE LADY A CIGAR --LONG AS IT A N'T ONE O' MINE--AN' KEEP 'ER MOVIN.

NURSE! YOUR PATIENT'S WAITIN' IMPATIENTLY!

WUHA OH...!



C'MON-- BE GOOD SHEEP, BA-A-ACK! BA-A-A-ACK!

WHO MADE YOU THE GENERAL?

YEAH-- WE DON'T WANNA MISS NOTHIN'-- AN' WE AIN'T TAKIN' ORDERS FROM A M'DGET N A DUCK SUIT!



TOUGH, MAC--THE SHOW'S OVER, MOVE YOUR BUTT!

TOMPKINS!*

YOU!!

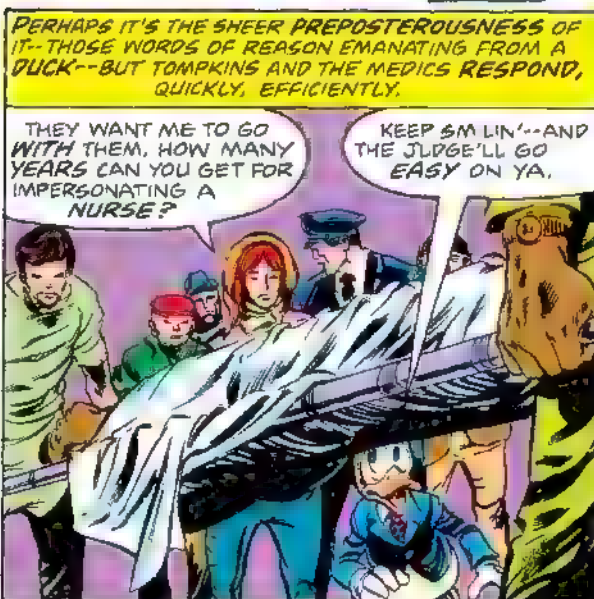
* WHOM THE DUCK FIRST MET IN GIANT-SIZE MAN-THING #4. --MARV.



I SHOULD'A KNOWN! THAT BROAD A FRIEND O' YOURS? WHAT'S SHE--?

STOW IT, FLAT-FOOT! SHE'S A NURSE! AN' THE KID'S BLEEDIN' TO DEATH!

SAVE THE HARD-BOILED COP ROUTINE FOR LATER!



PERHAPS IT'S THE SHEER PREPOSTEROUSNESS OF IT--THOSE WORDS OF REASON EMANATING FROM A DUCK--BUT TOMPKINS AND THE MEDICS RESPOND, QUICKLY, EFFICIENTLY.

THEY WANT ME TO GO WITH THEM. HOW MANY YEARS CAN YOU GET FOR IMPERSONATING A NURSE?

KEEP SM LIN'--AND THE JUDGE'LL GO EASY ON YA.

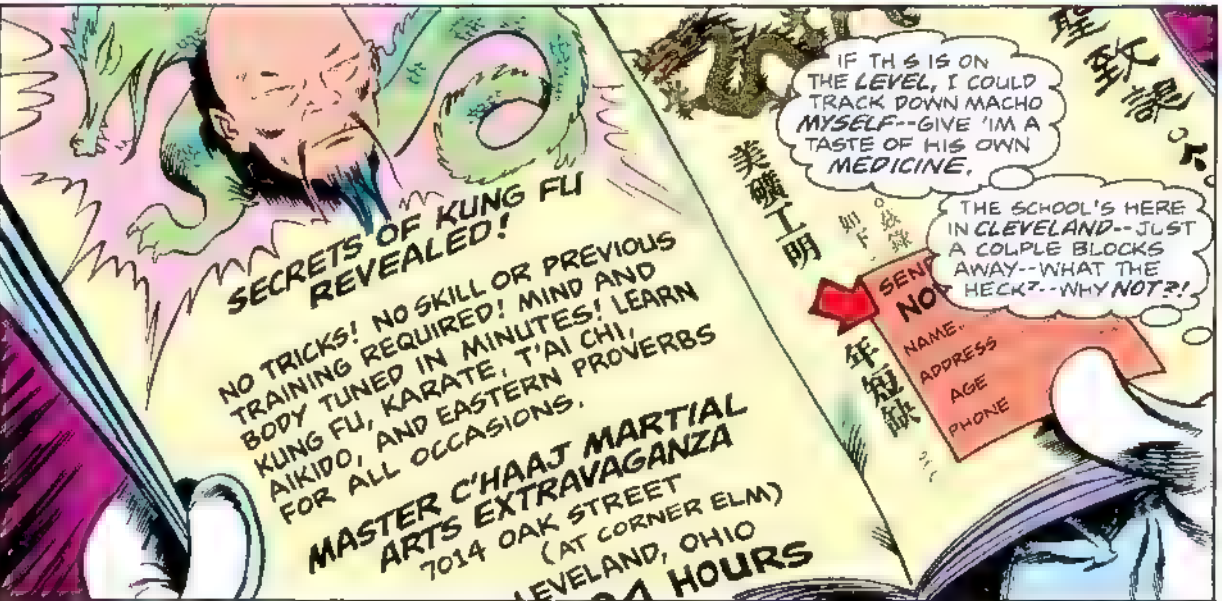
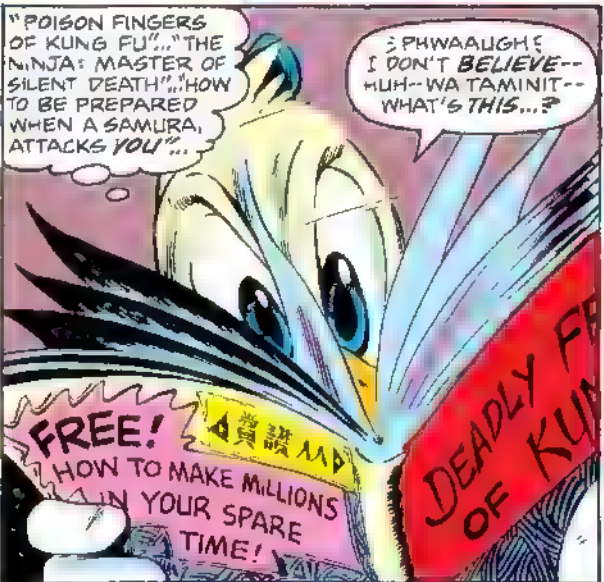
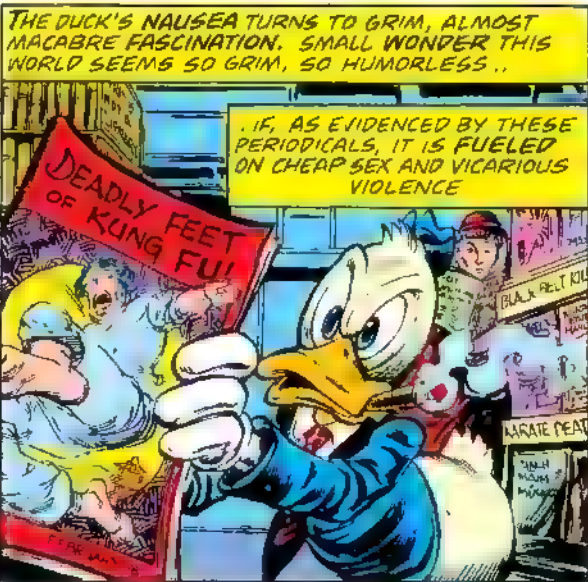


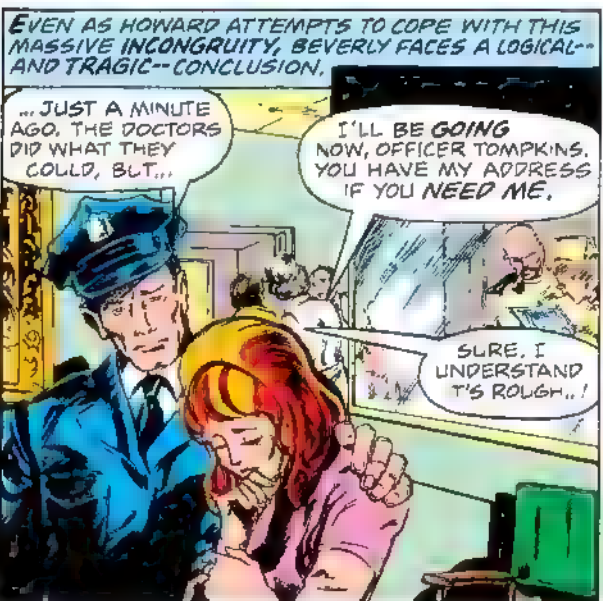
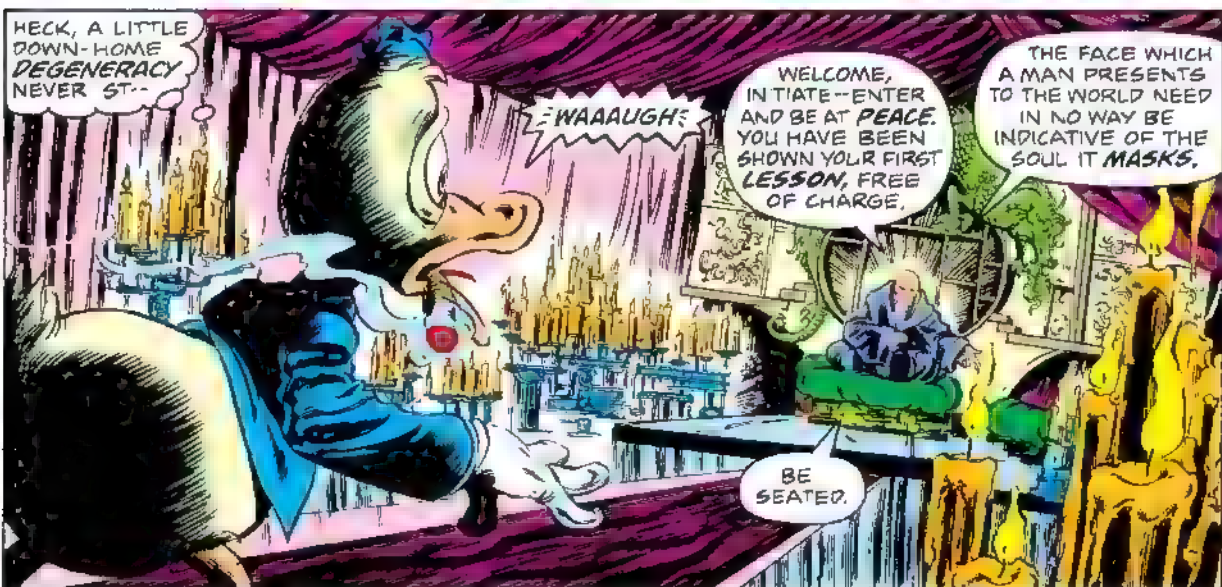
AND SO IT APPEARS, FOR NOW, TO BE OVER--THE FUROR STILLED, THE VIOLENCE QUELLED...

...EXCEPT IN THE PALPITANT BREAST OF THE FOWL.

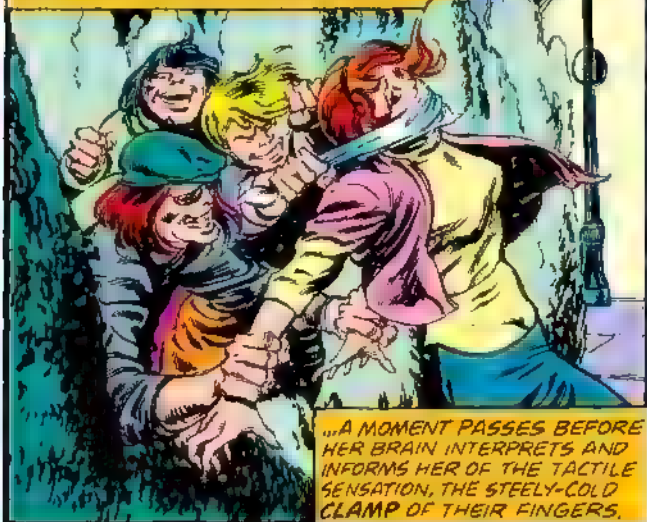
LOOK AT 'EM-- ONCE IT'S OUTTA THEIR SIGHT, IT'S JUST A STORY TO TELL AT THE OFFICE ON MONDAY.

GUESS I'M NOT AS JADED AS I THOUGHT.



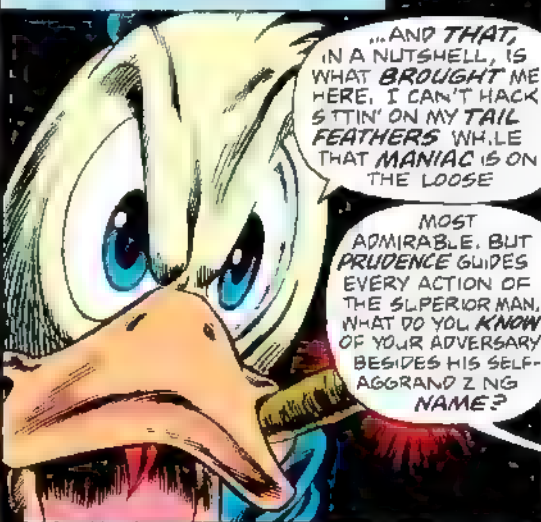


SHE NEVER HEARS MACHO'S CRONIES PADDING CATLIKE AT HER HEELS. INDEED, EVEN WHEN THEY ARE UPON HER...



...A MOMENT PASSES BEFORE HER BRAIN INTERPRETS AND INFORMS HER OF THE TACTILE SENSATION, THE STEELY-COLD CLAMP OF THEIR FINGERS.

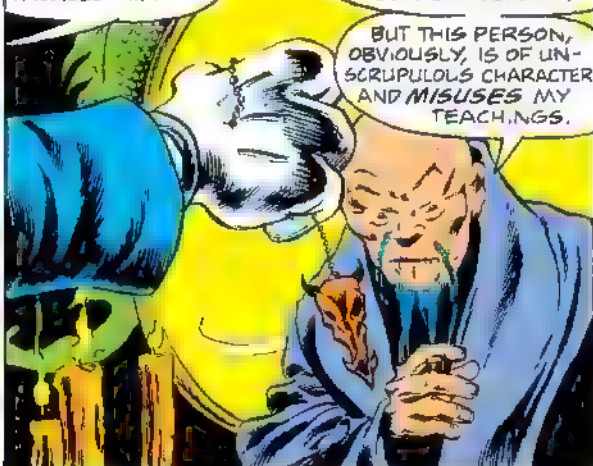
SHE IS SPIRITED AWAY, INTO THE NIGHT... WHILE HOWARD'S SPIRIT RETURNS AND IS NOURISHED.



...AND THAT, IN A NUTSHELL, IS WHAT BROUGHT ME HERE, I CAN'T HACK STIN' ON MY TAIL FEATHERS WHILE THAT MANIAC IS ON THE LOOSE

MOST ADMIRABLE, BUT PRUDENCE GUIDES EVERY ACTION OF THE SUPERIOR MAN, WHAT DO YOU KNOW OF YOUR ADVERSARY BESIDES HIS SELF-AGGRANDIZING NAME?

ZILCH--EXCEPT THAT HE WAS WEARIN' THIS. IT CAME UNHOOKED WHEN I TACKLED 'IM.



I FEAR... HE WAS ONE OF MY OWN STUDENTS, THEN. WE OFFER THAT CHARM-- FOR ONLY \$5.98--TO ALL OUR GRADUATES.

BUT THIS PERSON, OBVIOUSLY, IS OF UN-SCRUPULOUS CHARACTER AND MISUSES MY TEACHINGS.

IT IS NECESSARY, I THINK, HE BE TAUGHT ONE LESSON MORE.

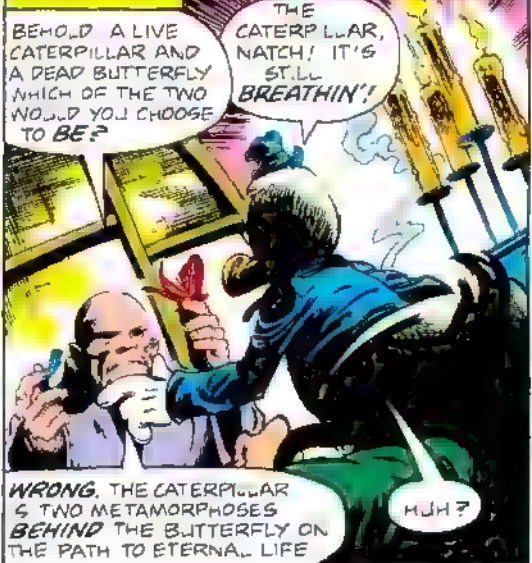


AND FOR THIS FINAL INSTRUCTION, YOU SHALL BE HIS TEACHER, POND HOPPER

YOU GOT YOURSELF A DEAL, MASSA' WHERE DO WE START?

IN THE UNSEEN WORLD BEHIND YOUR EYES, YOUR METAPHYSICAL PREPARATION PRECEDES ALL ELSE.

LESSON ONE:



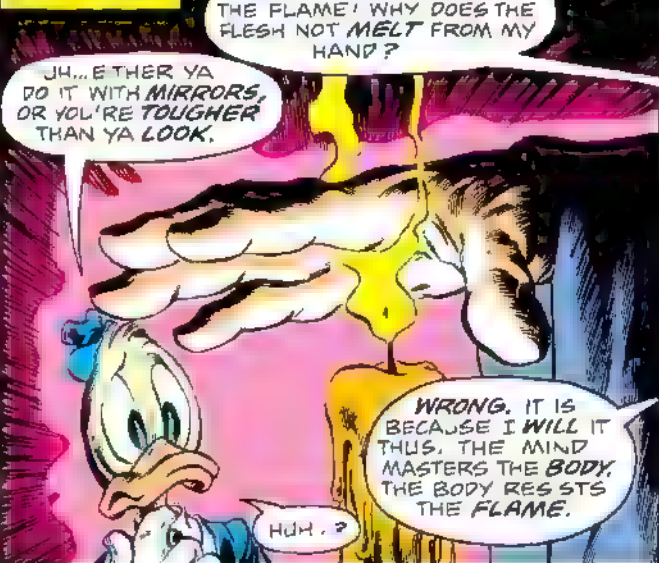
BEHOLD A LIVE CATERPILLAR AND A DEAD BUTTERFLY WHICH OF THE TWO WOULD YOU CHOOSE TO BE?

THE CATERPILLAR, NATCH! IT'S STILL BREATHIN'!

WRONG. THE CATERPILLAR'S TWO METAMORPHOSES BEHIND THE BUTTERFLY ON THE PATH TO ETERNAL LIFE

HUH?

LESSON TWO:



BEHOLD--MY HAND AND THE FLAME! WHY DOES THE FLESH NOT MELT FROM MY HAND?

UH... EITHER YA DO IT WITH MIRRORS, OR YOU'RE TOUGHER THAN YA LOOK.

WRONG. IT IS BECAUSE I WILL IT THUS, THE MIND MASTERS THE BODY, THE BODY RESISTS THE FLAME.

HUH?

THE PHYSICAL ASPECT OF THE DUCK IS DEVELOPED NEXT. HE LEARNS THE BALANCE AND POISE NECESSARY TO MASTER THE STAFF. HIS REFLEXES ARE HONED TO PRECISION. HE LEARNS TO MOVE FASTER THAN THE EYE CAN FOLLOW, TO REACT FASTER THAN EVEN A STEEL BLADE CAN TRAVEL.



HE LEARNS THE POSTURES OF ATTACK AND DEFENSE.

HE LEARNS TO APPLY THE STRENGTH OF HIS WILL TO THE BREAKING OF MATERIAL BARRIERS.

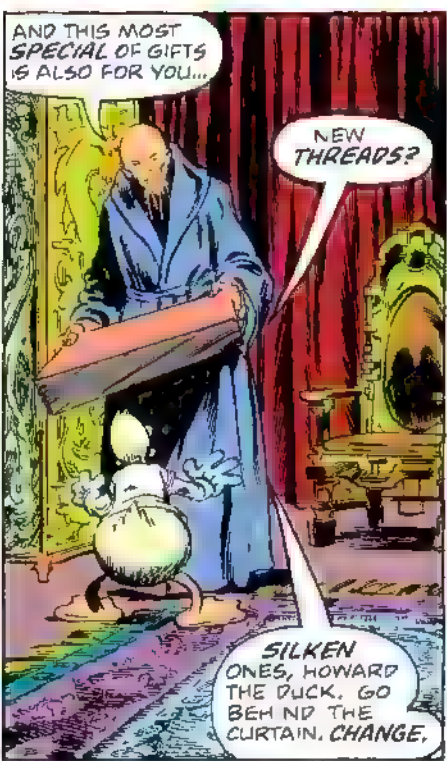
YOUR FINAL LESSON, PONDHOPPER! THE IRRELEVANCE OF CHRONOLOGICAL TIME TO THE ENLIGHTENMENT OF MAN OR FOWL.

YOUR WILL TO ACHIEVE HAS ENABLED YOU TO COMPLETE A LIFE-TIME OF STUDY IN A MERE THREE HOURS AND SEVEN TEEN MINUTES!

YOUR MEDALLION...!



CHOKEE I AM HONORED, MASTER.



AND THIS MOST SPECIAL OF GIFTS IS ALSO FOR YOU...

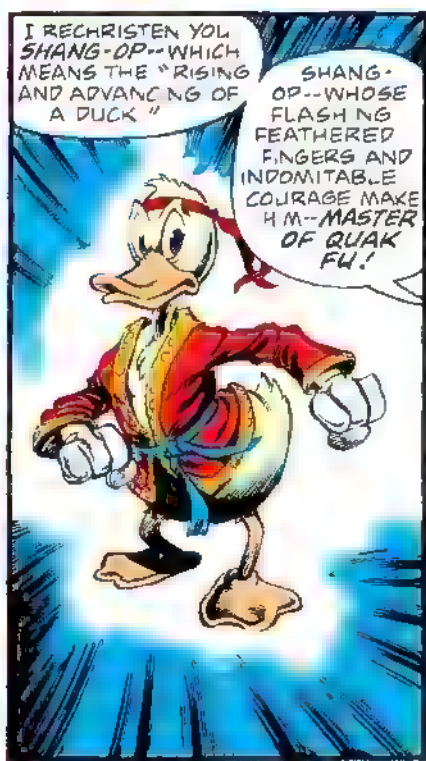
NEW THREADS?

SILKEN ONES, HOWARD THE DUCK. GO BEHIND THE CURTAIN. CHANGE.



DON THIS NEW GARB, THIS UNSULLIED CLOTH IN WHICH TO DRAPE YOUR BODY.

..THIS OUTWARD REFLECTION OF YOUR NEWLY-RAISED CONSCIOUSNESS.



I RECHRISTEN YOU SHANG-OP--WHICH MEANS THE "RISING AND ADVANCING OF A DUCK"

SHANG-OP--WHOSE FLASHING FEATHERED FINGERS AND INDOMITABLE COURAGE MAKE HIM--MASTER OF QUAK FU!



I DUNNO
F I'D GO *THAT*
FAR-- BUT I GOTTA
ADMIT, IT'S BEEN
A *VALUABLE*
THREE HOURS.

WH CH,
UH, REMINDS
ME--



HOW MUCH DO
I OWE Y--

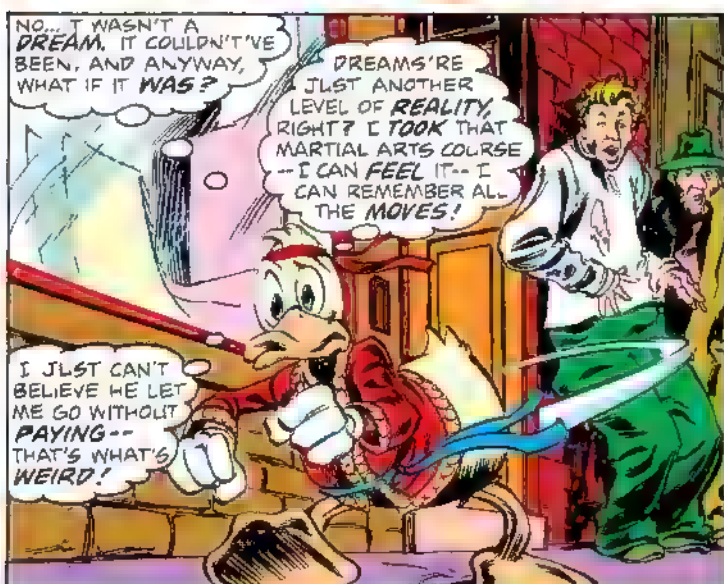
WAAUGH!



I'M STILL IN
THE LAVENDER
FLAMINGO!!

I MUST'A FANTASIZED
THE WHOLE THING! I
MUST'A BEEN STANDIN'
HERE ALL THE TI--

ONLY... IF
THAT'S WHAT
HAPPENED, WHERE'D
I GET THESE YIN-
YANG P J.'S?

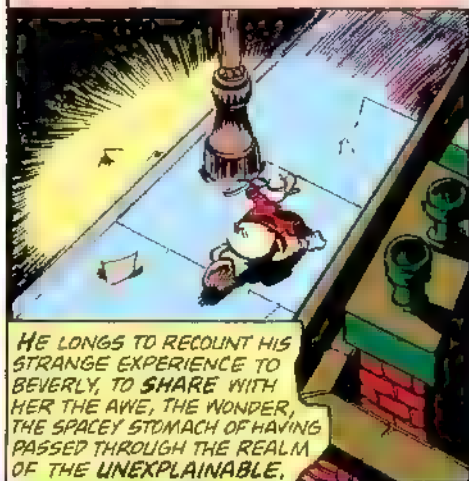


NO... I WASN'T A
DREAM. IT COULDN'T'VE
BEEN, AND ANYWAY,
WHAT IF IT *WAS*?

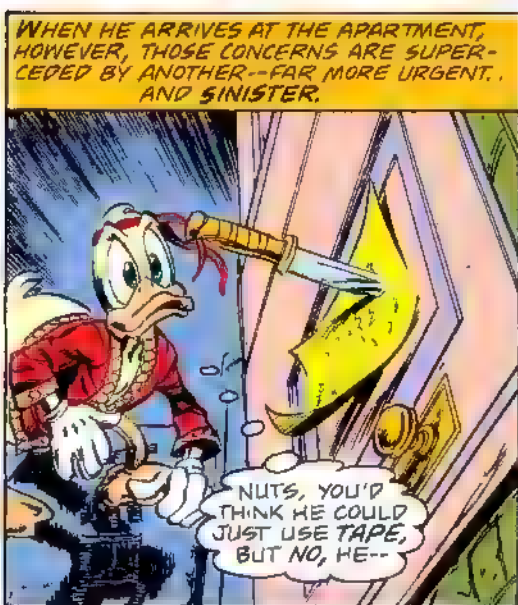
DREAMS'RE
JUST ANOTHER
LEVEL OF REALITY,
RIGHT? I TOOK THAT
MARTIAL ARTS COURSE
-- I CAN FEEL IT-- I
CAN REMEMBER ALL
THE MOVES!

I JUST CAN'T
BELIEVE HE LET
ME GO WITHOUT
PAYING--
THAT'S WHAT'S
WEIRD!

HIS WADDLE ACCELERATES TO A RUN. HE
IS ANXIOUS TO LEAVE THIS SEEDY NEIGH-
BORHOOD WITH ALL ITS SHADOW-CLOAKED
MYSTERIES BEHIND HIM.

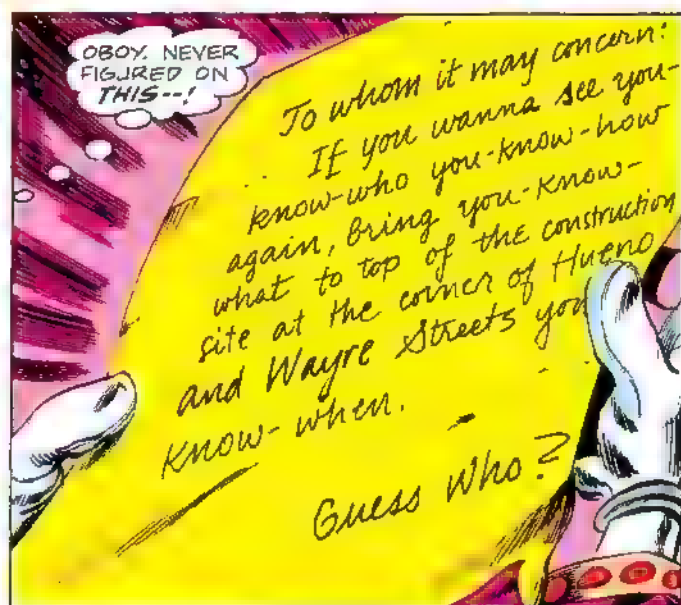


HE LONGS TO RECOUNT HIS
STRANGE EXPERIENCE TO
BEVERLY, TO SHARE WITH
HER THE AWE, THE WONDER,
THE SPACEY STOMACH OF HAVING
PASSED THROUGH THE REALM
OF THE UNEXPLAINABLE.



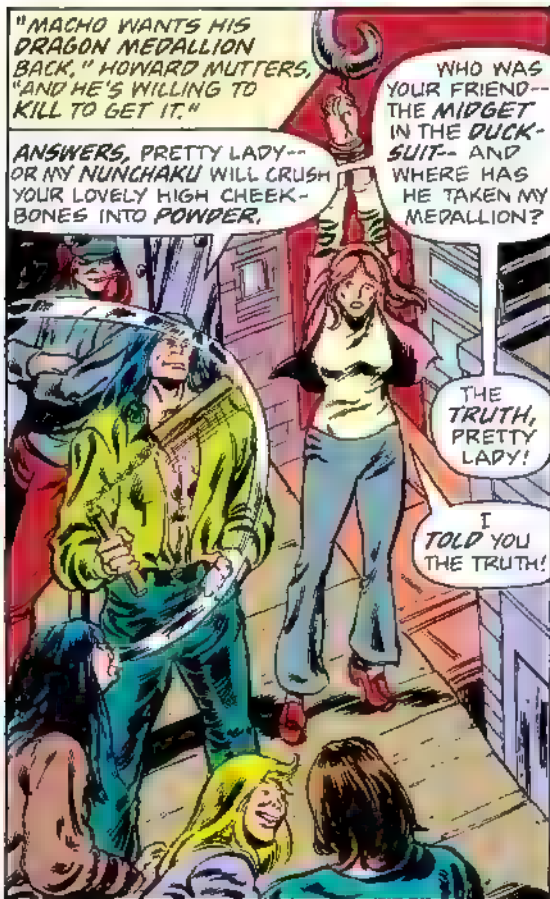
WHEN HE ARRIVES AT THE APARTMENT,
HOWEVER, THOSE CONCERNS ARE SUPER-
CEDED BY ANOTHER-- FAR MORE URGENT,
AND SINISTER.

NUTS, YOU'D
THINK HE COULD
JUST USE TAPE,
BUT NO, HE--



OBOY, NEVER
FIGURED ON
THIS--!

To whom it may concern:
If you wanna see you-
know-who you-know-how-
again, bring you-know-
what to top of the construction
site at the corner of Hueno
and Wayne Streets you
know-when.
Guess Who?



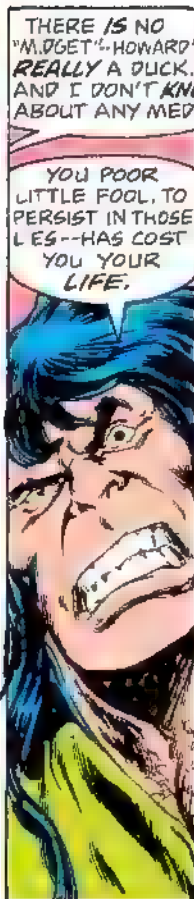
"MACHO WANTS HIS DRAGON MEDALLION BACK," HOWARD MUTTERS, "AND HE'S WILLING TO KILL TO GET IT."

ANSWERS, PRETTY LADY-- OR MY NUNCHAKU WILL CRUSH YOUR LOVELY HIGH CHEEK-BONES INTO POWDER.

WHO WAS YOUR FRIEND-- THE MIDGET IN THE DUCK-SUIT-- AND WHERE HAS HE TAKEN MY MEDALLION?

THE TRUTH, PRETTY LADY!

I TOLD YOU THE TRUTH!



THERE IS NO "MIDGET"--HOWARD'S REALLY A DUCK. AND I DON'T KNOW ABOUT ANY MED--

YOU POOR LITTLE FOOL, TO PERSIST IN THOSE LIES--HAS COST YOU YOUR LIFE.



SWING HER OUT-- OVER THE EDGE OF THE ROOF!

HEAR ME WELL, PRETTY LADY. YOU'VE SEEN FOR YOURSELF THAT I WILL GO TO ANY LENGTH TO PRESERVE MY HONOR.

I AM CAPABLE OF FAR MORE VIOLENCE WHEN MY FREEDOM IS AT STAKE



SPEAK! TELL THE TRUTH! NOW! OR--

AW, BLTTON YER LIP, YA PUNY, PUS LLANIMOLS, PEA-BRAINED PLG.LIST!

WHAT?! WHO DARES--?!



AH, C'MON-- KNOCK OFF THE COMIC-BOOK DIALOGUE, WILL YA?

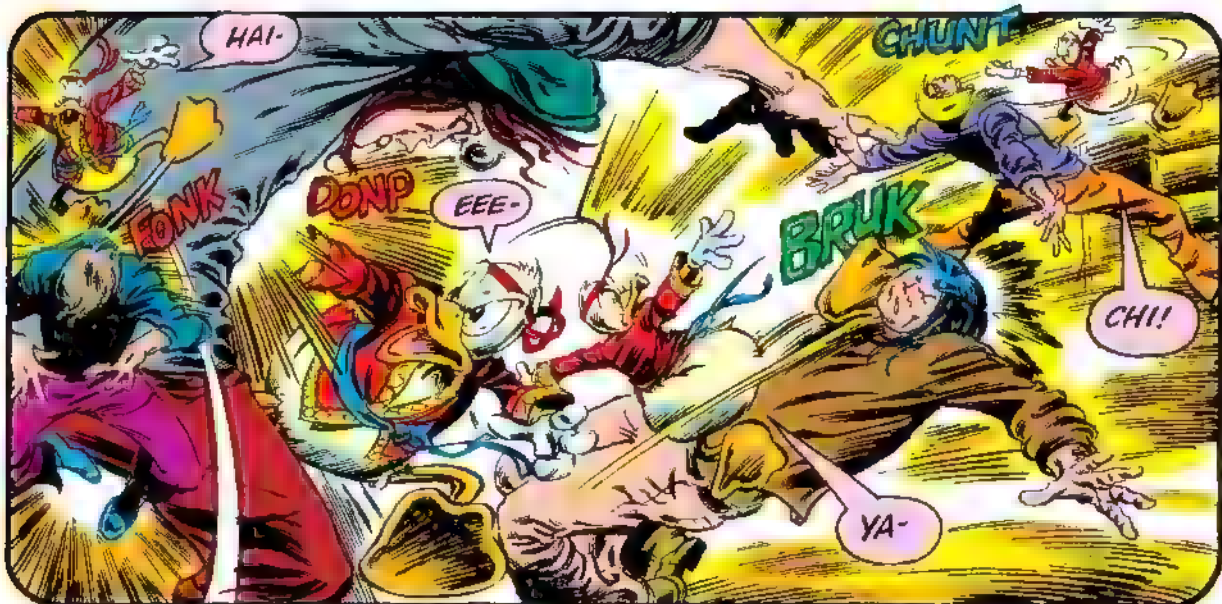
WHAT'S SO PARING ABOUT CALLING YOU NAMES? YOU'RE A BIG, HAIRY, BARREL-CHESTED MOUTH WITH NOTHIN' TO BACK IT UP!

WHY YOU--!



GET HIM! BREAK THOSE PIPECLEANERS HE CALLS ARMS-- AND WASTE HIM!

NOW THAT'S MORE LIKE IT. BACK TO YOUR ROOTS--THE GUTTER.



YOU'RE FRESH CUTTA GOONS, COUNT. LOOKS LIKE YER GONNA HAVE TA TAKE ME ON YOURSELF--

--ASSUMING YOU'RE MAN ENOUGH, YA SISSY!



THE ULTIMATE INSULT--SIGNED, SEALED, DELIVERED.

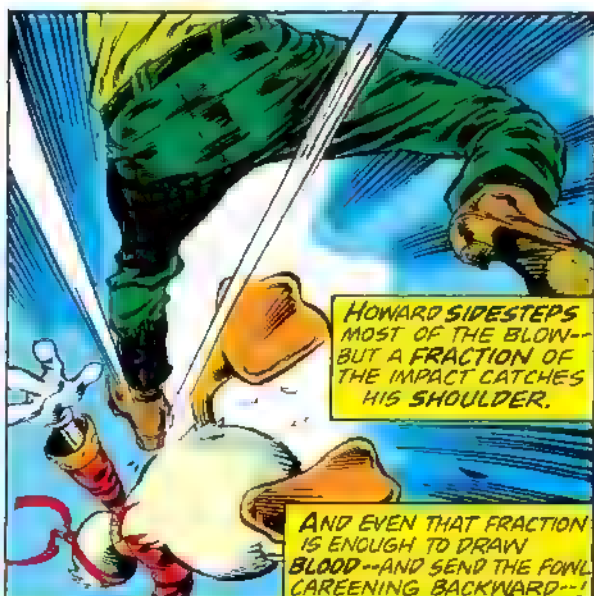
LIVID WITH RAGE, MACHO CEASES HIS BOASTFUL DECLAMATIONS. HIS VOICE BECOMES AN ANIMALISTIC GRUNT AND SNARL AS, SUCKING IN AIR, TENSING EVERY MUSCLE, HE WORKS UP HIS CHI--HIS FIGHTING SPIRIT.



WHEN HIS BODY AND MIND ARE NAUGHT BUT PURE DESTRUCTIVE ENERGY--



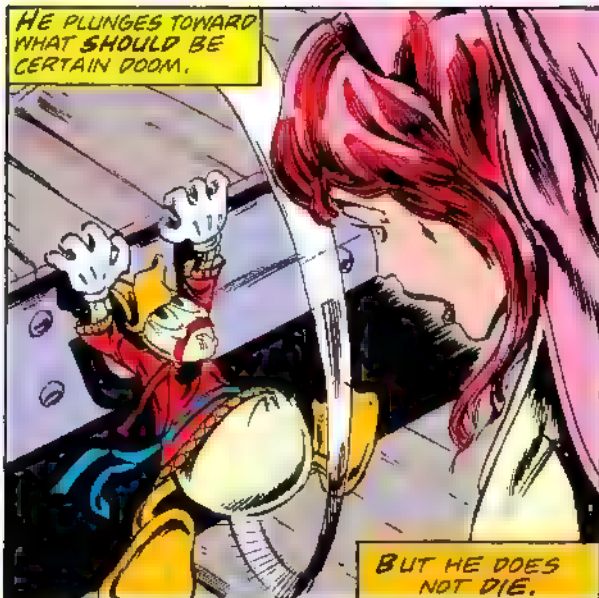
HE ATTACKS!!



HOWARD SIDESTEPS MOST OF THE BLOW-- BUT A FRACTION OF THE IMPACT CATCHES HIS SHOULDER.

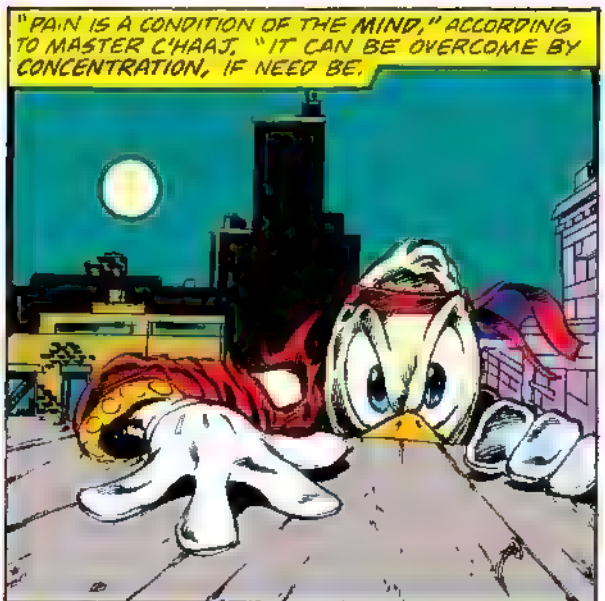
AND EVEN THAT FRACTION IS ENOUGH TO DRAW BLOOD--AND SEND THE FOWL CAREENING BACKWARD--!

HE PLUNGES TOWARD
WHAT SHOULD BE
CERTAIN DOOM.

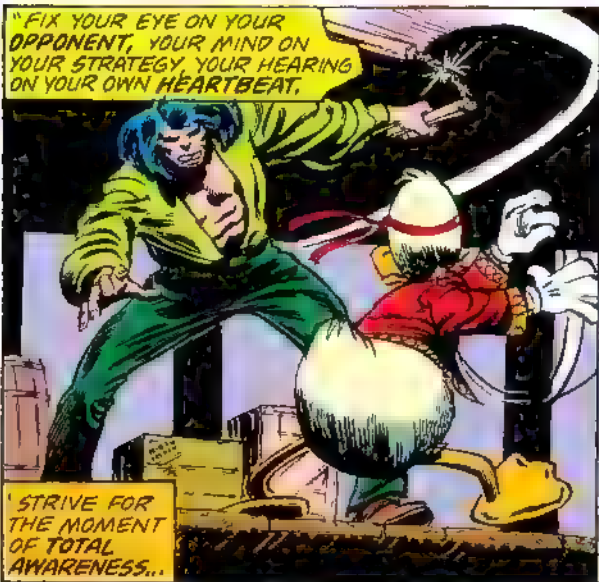


BUT HE DOES
NOT DIE.

"PAIN IS A CONDITION OF THE MIND," ACCORDING
TO MASTER C'HAAT, "IT CAN BE OVERCOME BY
CONCENTRATION, IF NEED BE.

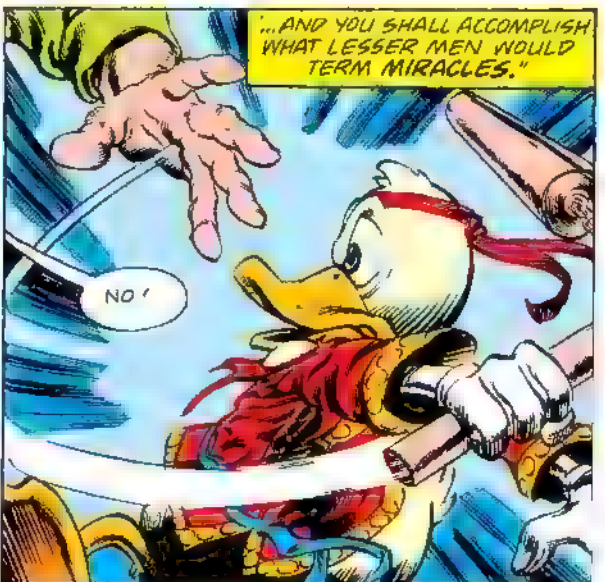


"FIX YOUR EYE ON YOUR
OPPONENT, YOUR MIND ON
YOUR STRATEGY, YOUR HEARING
ON YOUR OWN HEARTBEAT.



'STRIVE FOR
THE MOMENT
OF TOTAL
AWARENESS...

"...AND YOU SHALL ACCOMPLISH
WHAT LESSER MEN WOULD
TERM MIRACLES."



NO!

A FLUKE--THAT'S
WHAT IT IS! MY FOUR
LIEUTENANTS--THE
NUNCHAKU--
--BEGINNER'S
LUCK, NOTHING
MORE!

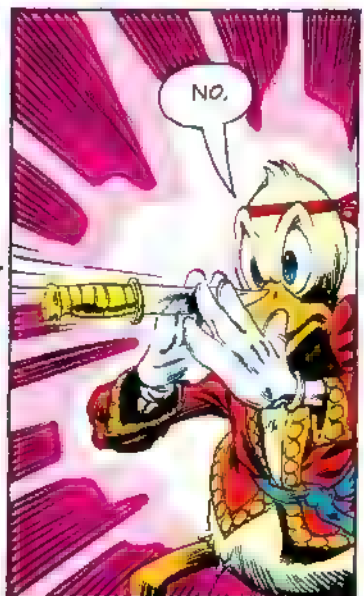


WELL, YOUR
GOOD FORTUNE HAS
JUST COME TO AN
END, SHORTY!



DIE!!

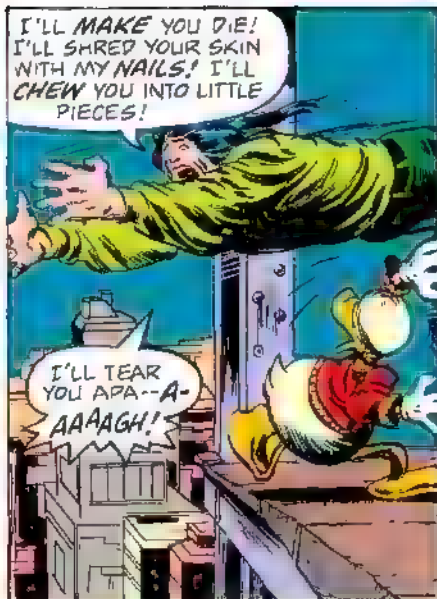
NO.





TEETH CLENCHED, EYES BULGING, FACE RUBICUND WITH FURY, MACHO MAKES A FINAL, HATE-BLINDED CHARGE.

YES!
YES! DIE
WHEN I TELL
YOU TO DIE!



I'LL MAKE YOU DIE!
I'LL SHRED YOUR SKIN
WITH MY NAILS! I'LL
CHEW YOU INTO LITTLE
PIECES!

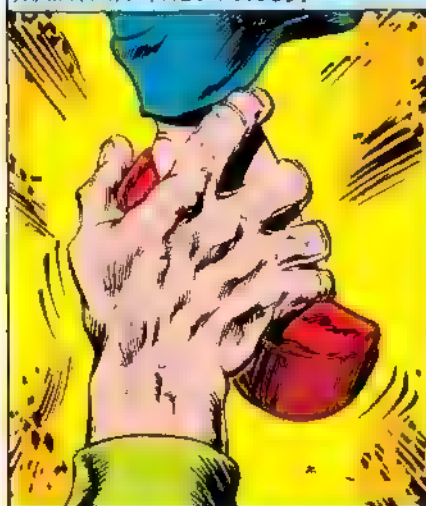
I'LL TEAR
YOU APA--A-
AAAAGH!



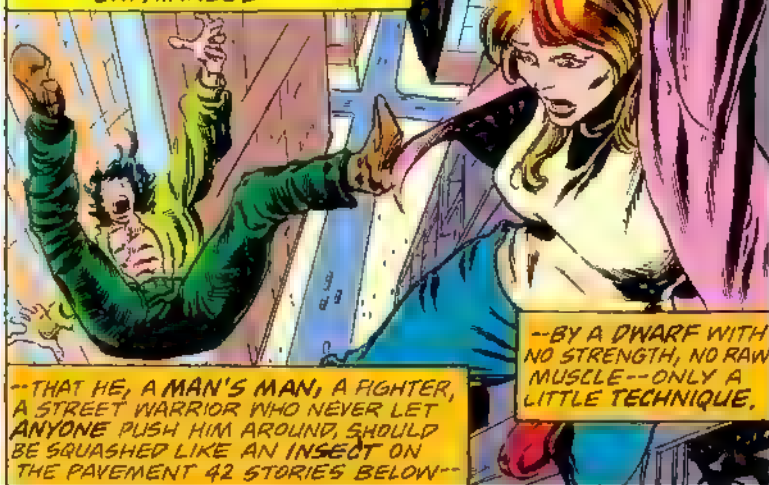
FROM THE INSTANT HE
LEAVES THE ROOF, HE IS
CLUTCHING FURIOUSLY,

FORTUNATELY,
HE HAS PLACED
SOMETHING THERE
IN THE EMPTY
AIR TO GRAB.

UNFORTUNATELY, HIS SLICK, SWEATY
PALMS AND FINGERS CANNOT
MAINTAIN THEIR HOLD.

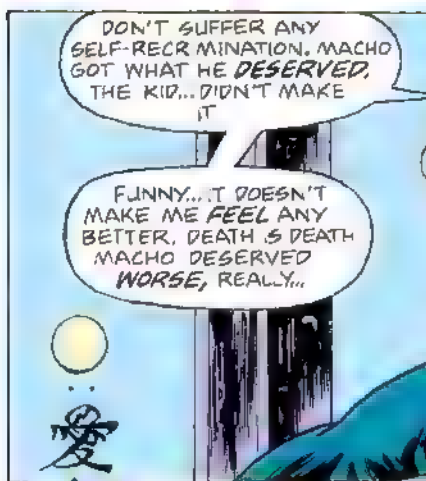


AND HE FALLS, STILL SCREAMING
CURSES AT THE WOMAN AND THE
DUCK, STILL PROTESTING FATE'S
UNFAIRNESS--



--THAT HE, A MAN'S MAN, A FIGHTER,
A STREET WARRIOR WHO NEVER LET
ANYONE PUSH HIM AROUND, SHOULD
BE SQUASHED LIKE AN INSECT ON
THE PAVEMENT 42 STORIES BELOW--

--BY A DWARF WITH
NO STRENGTH, NO RAW
MUSCLE--ONLY A
LITTLE TECHNIQUE.



DON'T SUFFER ANY
SELF-RECRIMINATION. MACHO
GOT WHAT HE DESERVED.
THE KID... DIDN'T MAKE
IT

FUNNY... IT DOESN'T
MAKE ME FEEL ANY
BETTER. DEATH'S DEATH
MACHO DESERVED
WORSE, REALLY...

AN' HE GOT
IT, SEE, BEV--HE DIED
A CATERPILLAR, THE
KID DIED A BUTTER-
FLY...!



HOWARD FACES THE
SOMNAMBULENT
MENACE OF:

THE SIXTH SLEEPER!

STILL
ONLY **25¢**

MARVEL COMICS GROUP

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TRAPPED IN A WORLD HE NEVER MADE!

HOWARD THE DUCK

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY



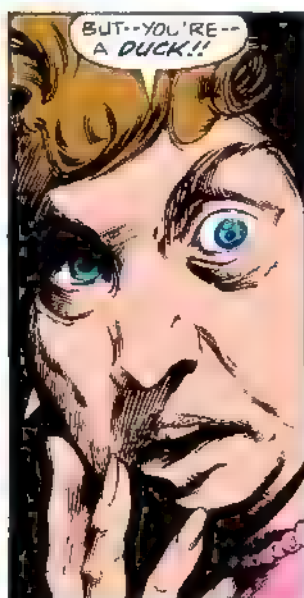
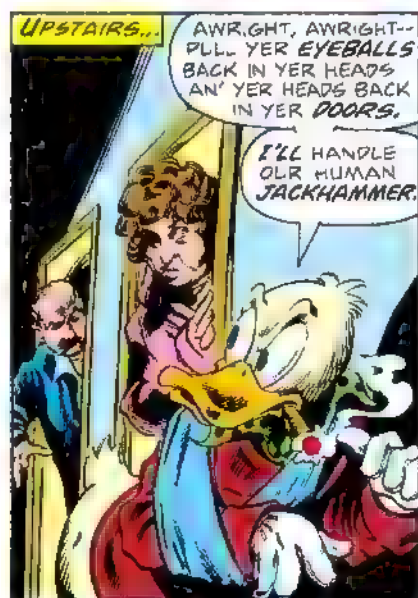
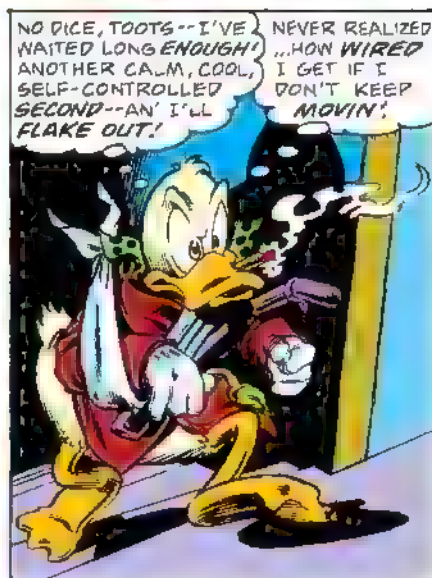
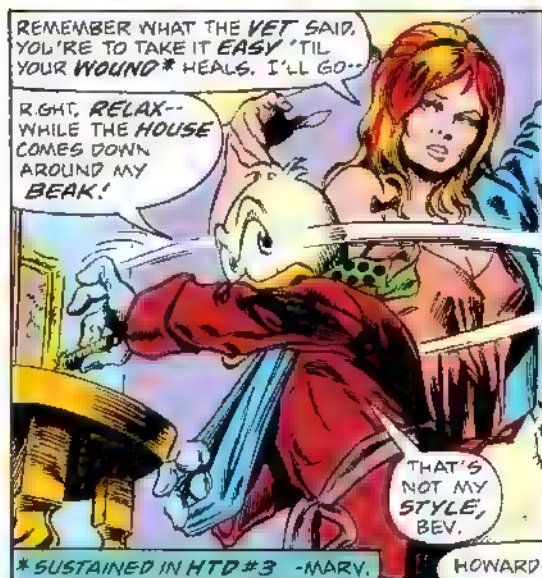
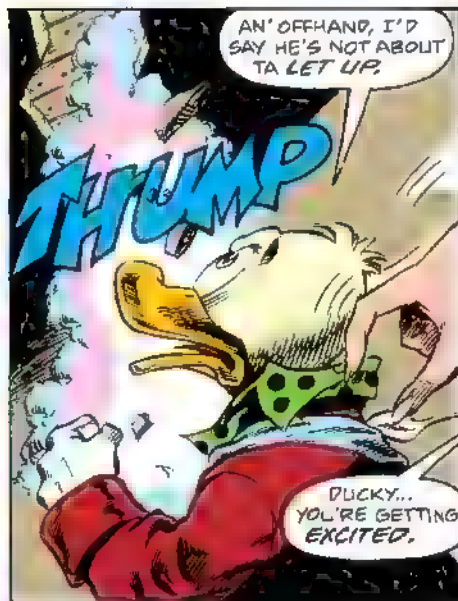
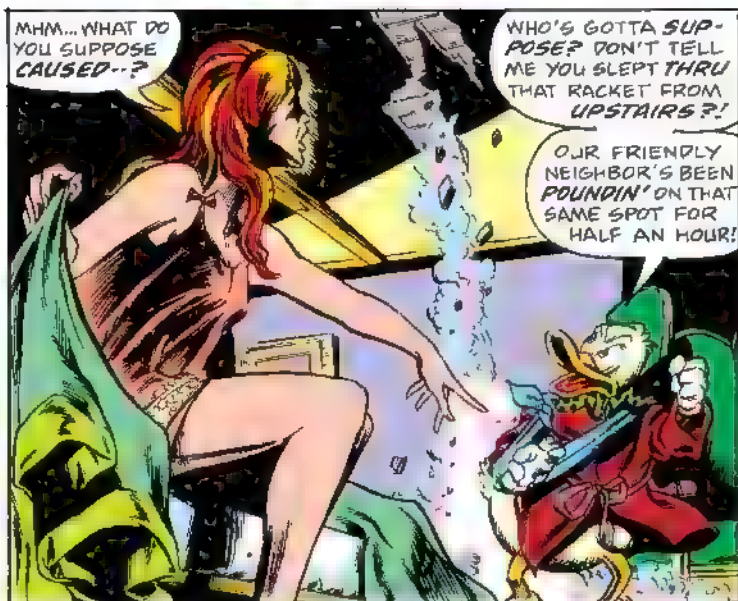
PANIC GRIPS THE HEART OF A FEARFUL CITY...
WHEN THE SLEEPER WAKES!

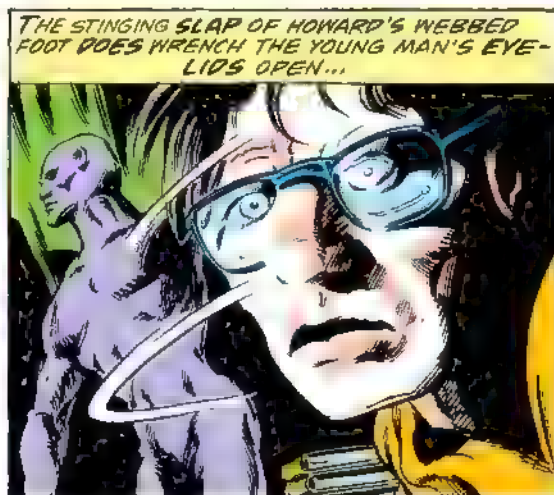
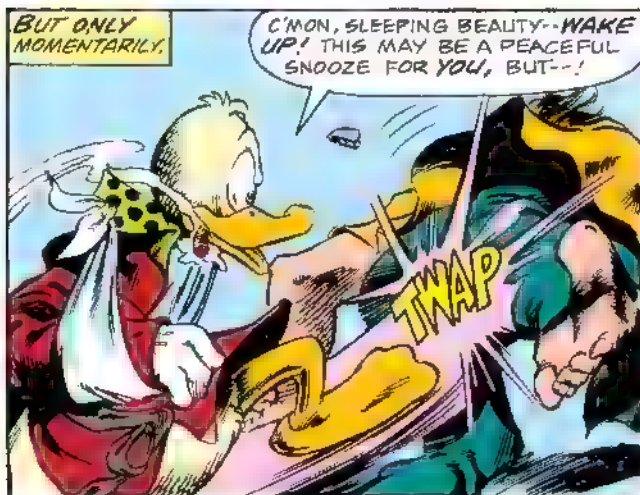
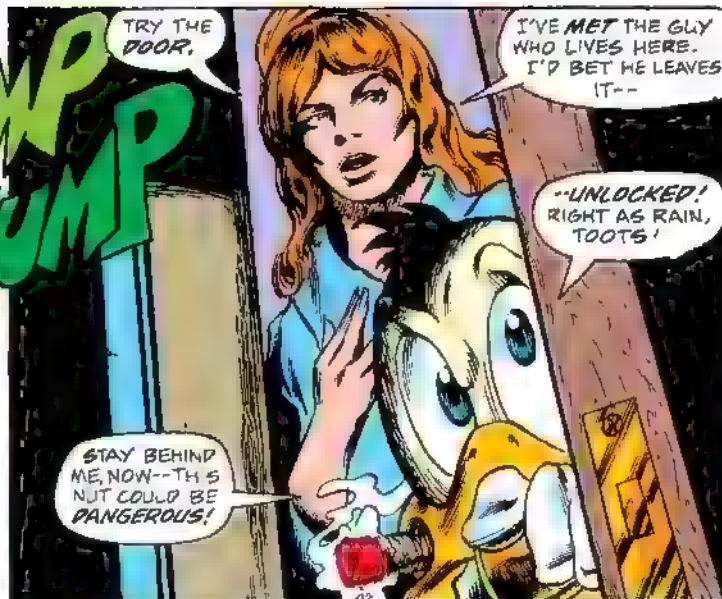
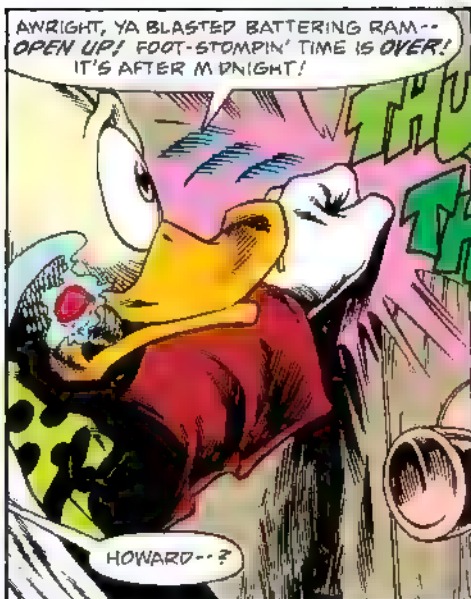
From the time of his hatching, he was...different. A potentially brilliant scholar who dreaded the structured environment of school, he educated himself in the streets, taking whatever work was available, formulating his philosophy of self from what he learned of the world about him. And then the Cosmic Axis shifted...and that world *changed*. Suddenly, he was stranded in a universe he could not fathom. Without warning, he became a strange fowl in an even stranger land.

Stan Lee PRESENTS: **HOWARD THE DUCK!** GREAT TM

WRITTEN BY STEVE GERBER * ILLUSTRATED BY GENE COLAN * S. LEIALOHA INKER * A. KAWECKI, LETTERER * MICHELE W., COLOR ST * MARY WOLFMAN EDITOR







...BUT HIS OUTLOOK REMAINS
SOMEWHAT DISTORTED BY
SLEEP

THE DUCK APPEARS A
CRIMSON-EYED, CARNIVOR-
OUS MONSTROSITY...
BEVERLY SWITZLER, A
BARDONIC, SADISTIC
SORCERESS WHOM THE
DUCK-DEMON SERVES.

JUST TO GET
HIM TO--

WAKE UP!!

THEY INTEND TO HARM
HIM... EVEN SLASH HIM
TO RIBBONS IF
NECESSARY. AND
WHY?

AAAGH

HADDA POP YA
ONE, PAL--YOU WERE
FLAK N' OUT, DIDN'T
MEAN TO HURT YOU
THAT BAD...!

YOU DIDN'T...
I'M SORRY...
I THOUGHT...
BUT I GUESS...
I'M NOT
BLEEDING,
AM I?

REALLY WEIRD,
HUH? YOU HAVE
THIS PROBLEM
A LOT?

ONLY WHEN
I SLEEP--
THAT IS, MOST
OF MY LIFE.

LORD,
I SOUND
DEPRESSING.

YEAH,
WELL--
THAT'S
OKAY.

WHAT'S AN
ARTIST WITHOUT
A TEMPERAMENT?

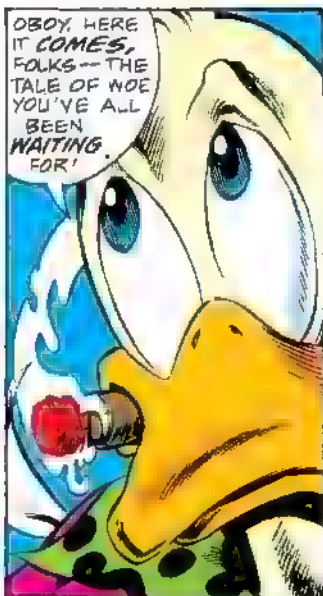
UH-UH, THE QUESTION IS: "WHAT'S
A TEMPERAMENT WITHOUT AN
ARTIST?"

ANSWER:
ME--PAUL
SAME--
SPECIALIST
IN UNFINISHED
WORKS.

WANNA TALK
ABOUT IT--OR
SHOULD WE JUST
BUZZ OFF?

NOPE. IT
WAS ALL A
DREAM.

NIGHTMARE,
YOU MEAN



OBOY, HERE IT COMES, FOLKS-- THE TALE OF NOE YOU'VE ALL BEEN WAITING FOR!



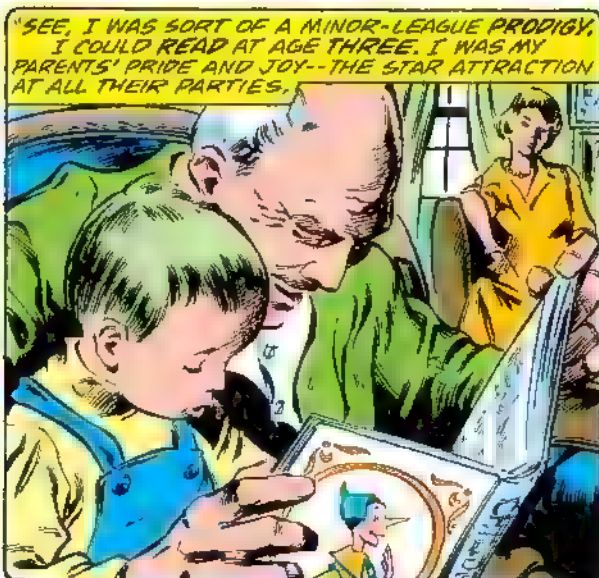
OH, HOWARD-- SHUSH!

DON'T LET MY FEATHERED FRIEND INHIBIT YOU, PAUL. JUST POUR OUT YOUR HEART. I'LL PUT ON SOME COFFEE.

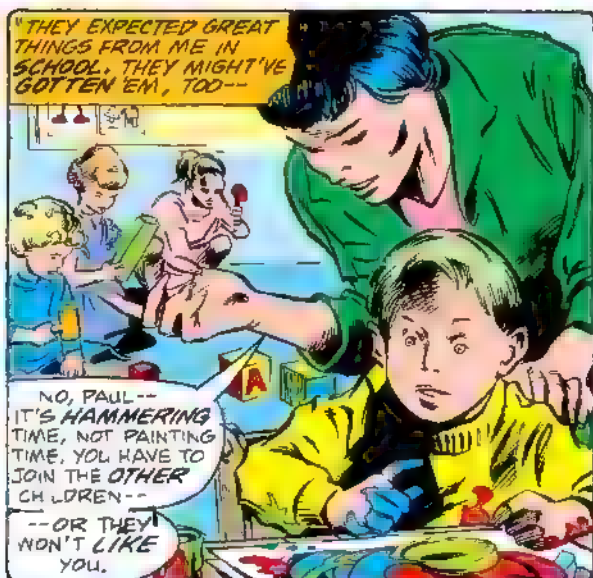
YOU'RE SURE YOU WANT TO LISTEN TO THIS?



I MEAN-- IT GOES BACK TO WHEN I WAS JUST A KID.



"SEE, I WAS SORT OF A MINOR-LEAGUE PRODIGY. I COULD READ AT AGE THREE. I WAS MY PARENTS' PRIDE AND JOY-- THE STAR ATTRACTION AT ALL THEIR PARTIES.



"THEY EXPECTED GREAT THINGS FROM ME IN SCHOOL. THEY MIGHT'VE GOTTEN 'EM, TOO--

NO, PAUL-- IT'S HAMMERING TIME, NOT PAINTING TIME. YOU HAVE TO JOIN THE OTHER CHILDREN-- --OR THEY WON'T LIKE YOU.



"--IF I HADN'T BEEN SO BORED WITH WHAT THEY WERE TEACHING AND THE DULL, DRONING WAY THEY TAUGHT IT. AS IT WAS, I DAYDREAMED A LOT.

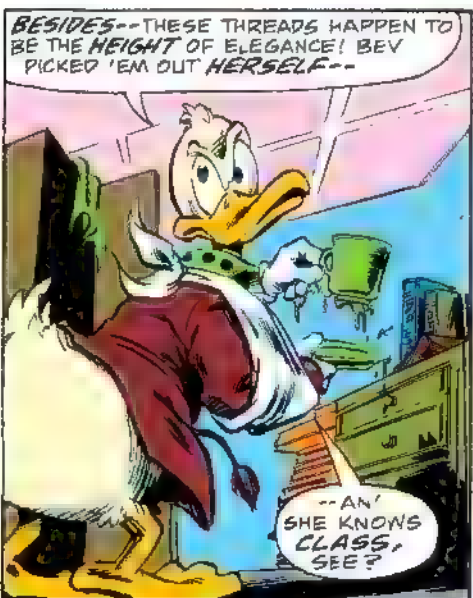
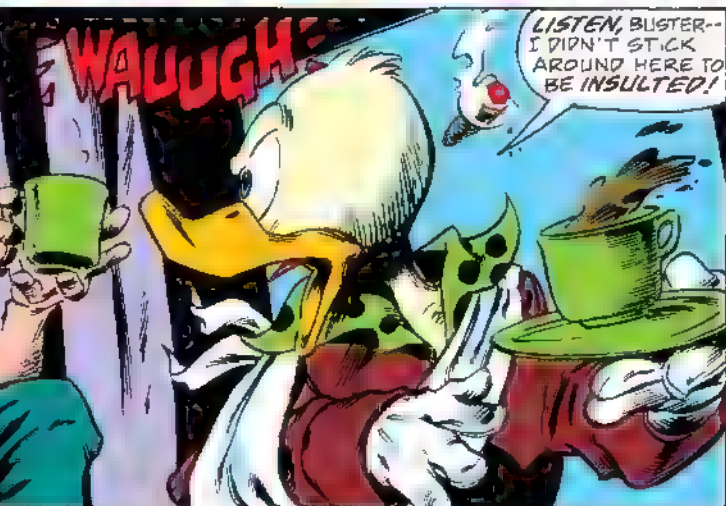
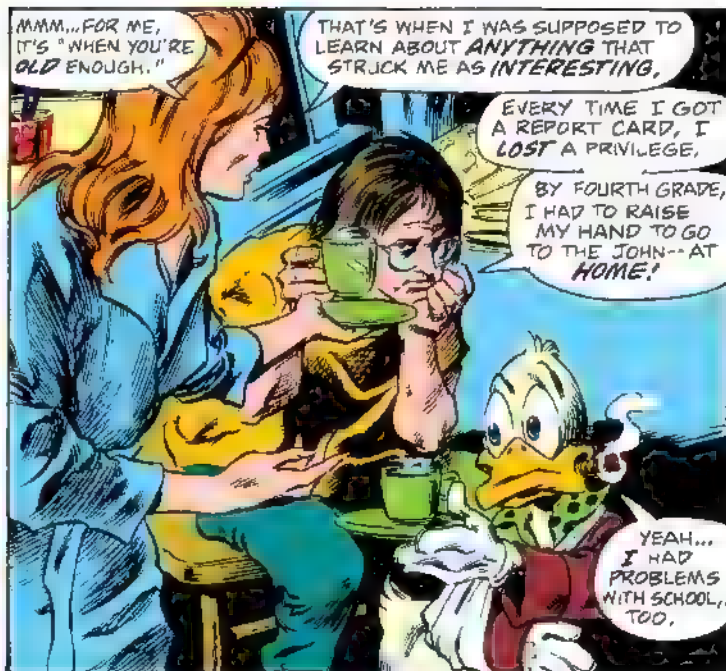


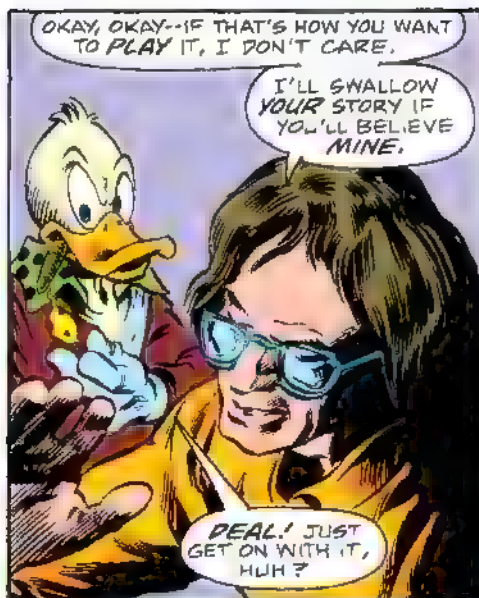
"SO IT WENT ON MY RECORD THAT I WAS AN UNDERACHIEVER, A PROBLEM LEARNER WITH NO ATTENTION SPAN



"AND THE KIDS NICK-NAMED ME 'SLEEPY.'"

"REAL CREATIVE TYPES, THOSE LITTLE RASCALS.





OKAY, OKAY--IF THAT'S HOW YOU WANT TO PLAY IT, I DON'T CARE.

I'LL SWALLOW YOUR STORY IF YOU'LL BELIEVE MINE.

DEAL! JUST GET ON WITH IT, HUH?

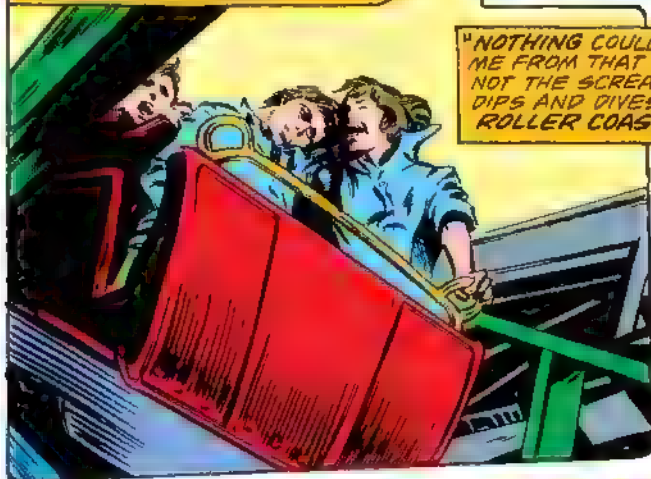


IF YOU INSIST:

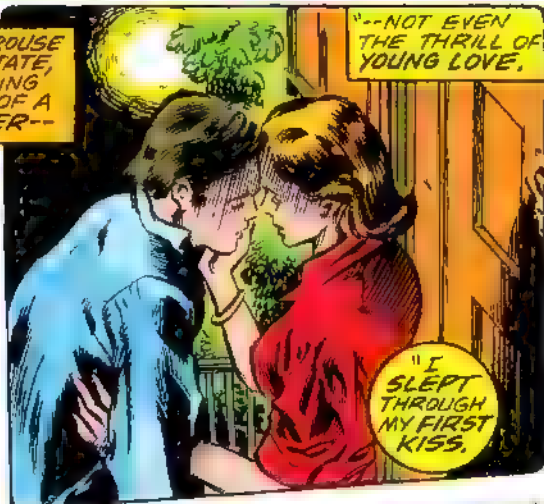
"PHASE TWO HIT WHEN I WAS TEN OR SO. BORED, ANGRY, FRUSTRATED, BUT BASICALLY PASSIVE BY NATURE--

I BEGAN DOZING OFF WHENEVER THE PRESSURES STARTED TO BUILD--WHENEVER AND WHEREVER.

"IT WAS THE ONLY SAFETY VALVE I HAD--BUT IT LED TO SOME PRETTY STRANGE SCENES.



"NOTHING COULD ROUSE ME FROM THAT STATE, NOT THE SCREAMING DIPS AND DIVES OF A ROLLER COASTER--



"--NOT EVEN THE THRILL OF YOUNG LOVE.

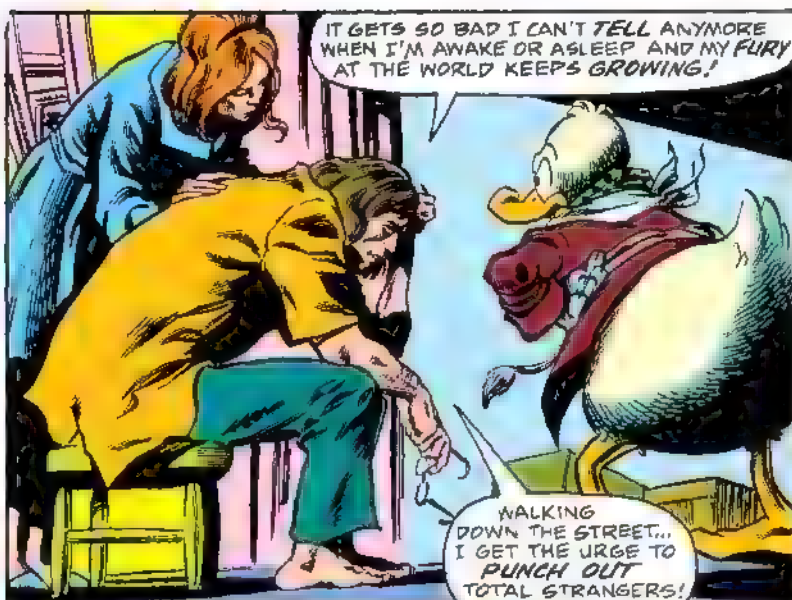
"I SLEPT THROUGH MY FIRST KISS.

"MEANWHILE, OF COURSE, THERE WAS ALL THIS HOSTILITY SWELLING LIKE A TUMOR INSIDE ME, AND AS I SPENT MORE AND MORE OF MY LIFE ASLEEP--



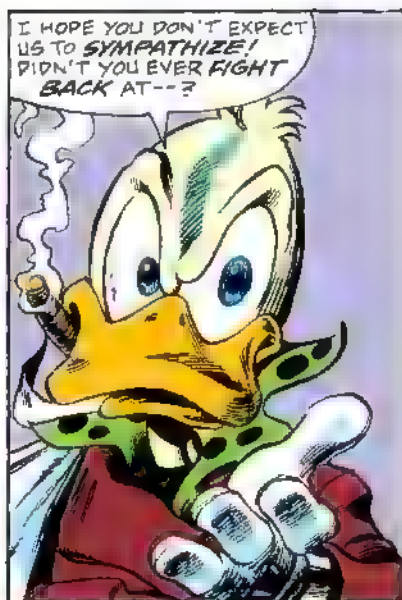
"--IT BEGAN TO SURFACE IN VIOLENT DREAMS. I SAW MYSELF AS A RAMPAGING COLOSSUS.

"I'D TRAMPLE WHOLE CITIES--CRUSH ANYTHING, ANYONE THAT STOOD IN MY WAY OR TRIED TO JACK ME AROUND."



IT GETS SO BAD I CAN'T TELL ANYMORE WHEN I'M AWAKE OR ASLEEP AND MY FURY AT THE WORLD KEEPS GROWING!

WALKING DOWN THE STREET... I GET THE URGE TO PUNCH OUT TOTAL STRANGERS!



I HOPE YOU DON'T EXPECT US TO SYMPATHIZE! DIDN'T YOU EVER FIGHT BACK AT--?



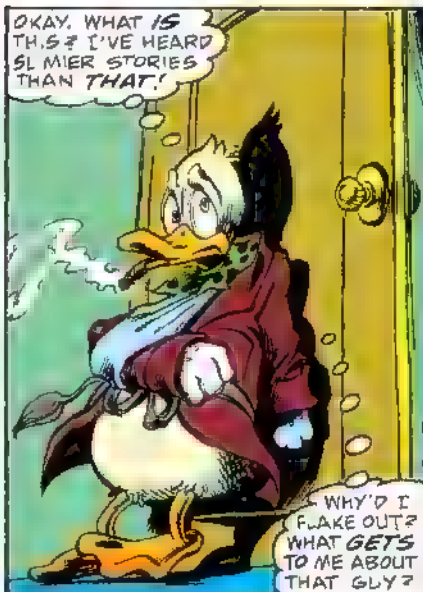
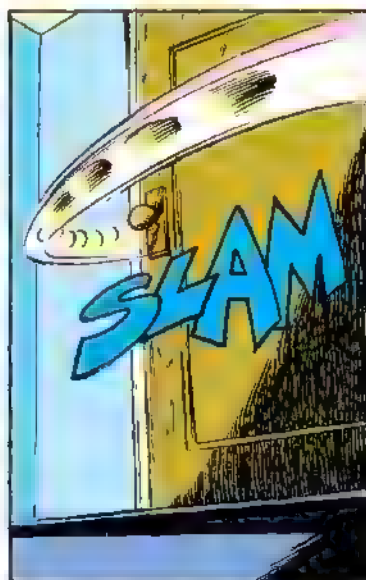
OH, NO! I'VE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO HURT ANYONE!

IF SOMEONE STANDS ON MY TOE, I'D RATHER WAIT FOR THEM TO MOVE THAN RISK OFFENDING THEM BY ASKING...!



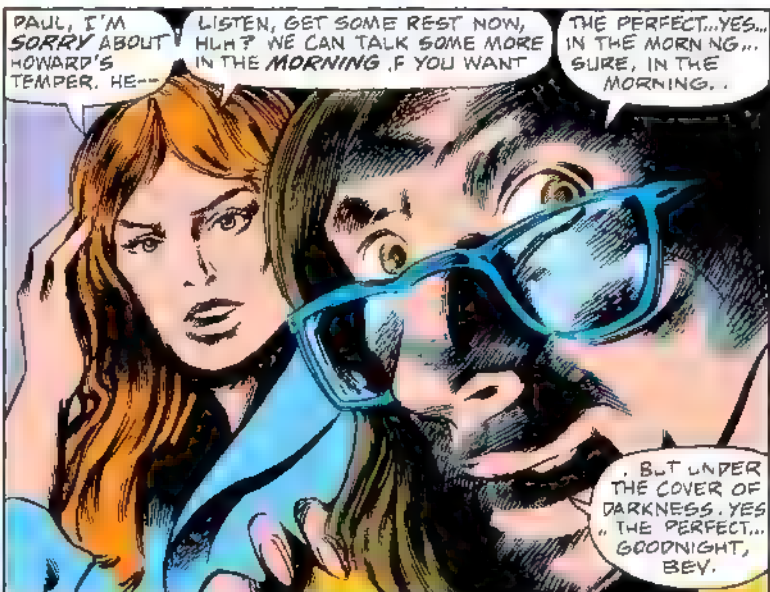
'COURSE--THAT DOESN'T STOP YA FROM BANGIN' IN CEILINGS AT THREE A.M.!

HECK, YOU GOT THE PERFECT EXCUSE FOR ANY ACTION..YOU DID IT IN YOUR SLEEP!



OKAY, WHAT IS THIS? I'VE HEARD SLAMMER STORIES THAN THAT!

WHY'D I FLAKE OUT? WHAT GETS TO ME ABOUT THAT GUY?

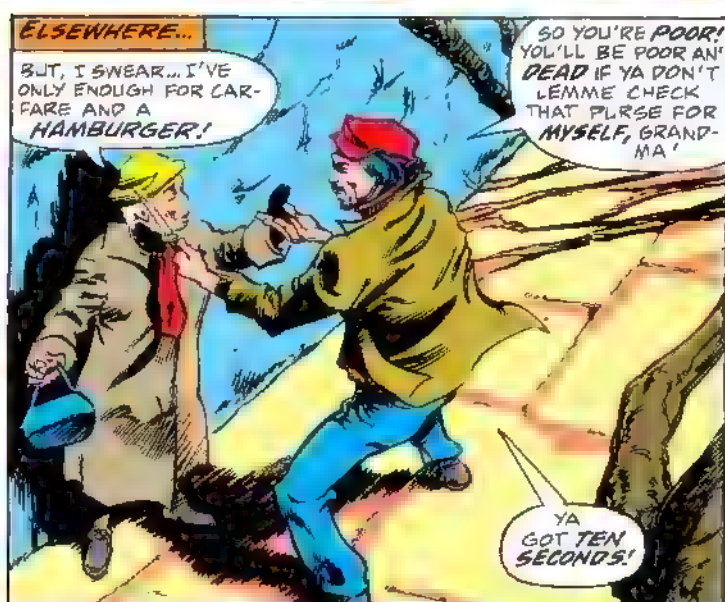
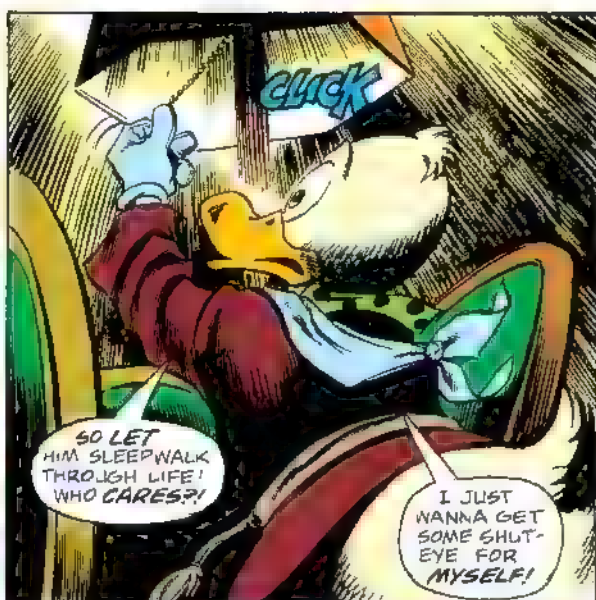
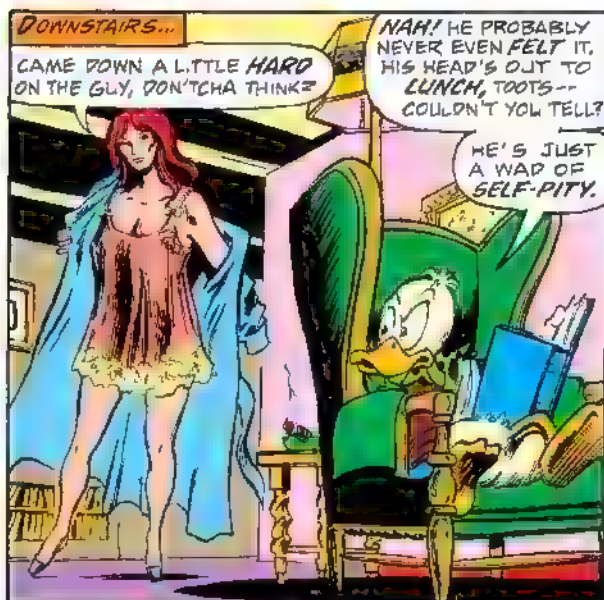


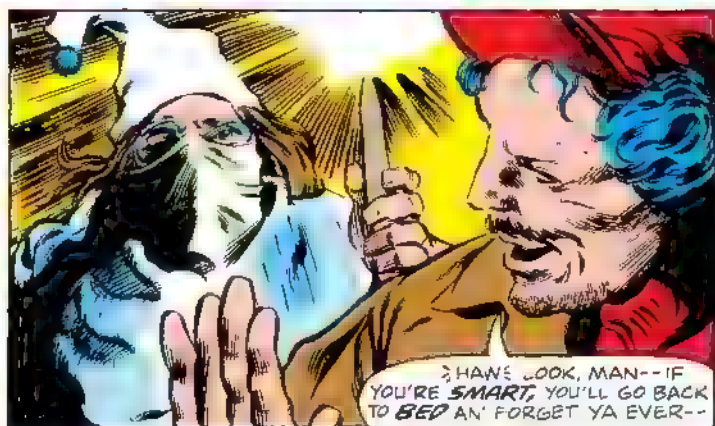
PAUL, I'M SORRY ABOUT HOWARD'S TEMPER. HE--

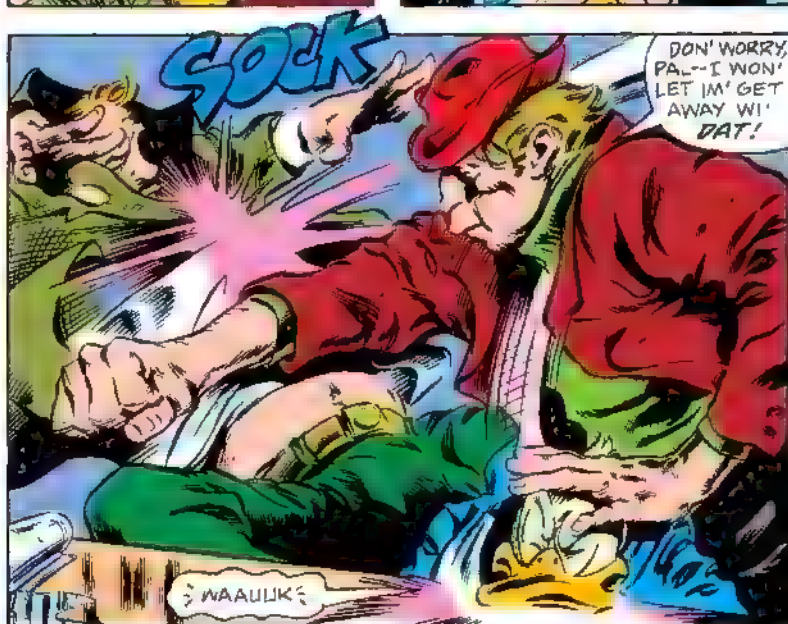
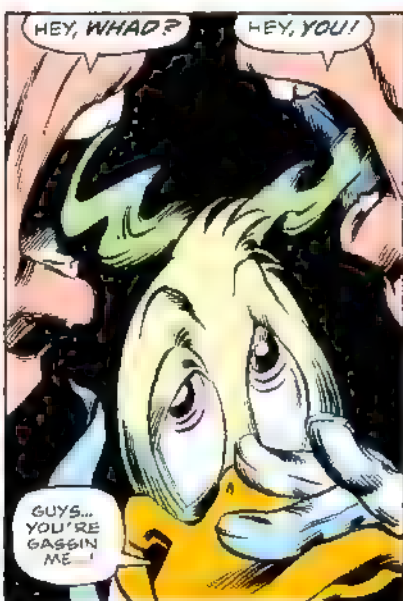
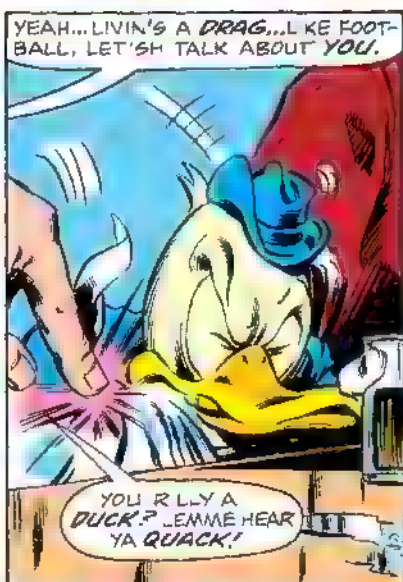
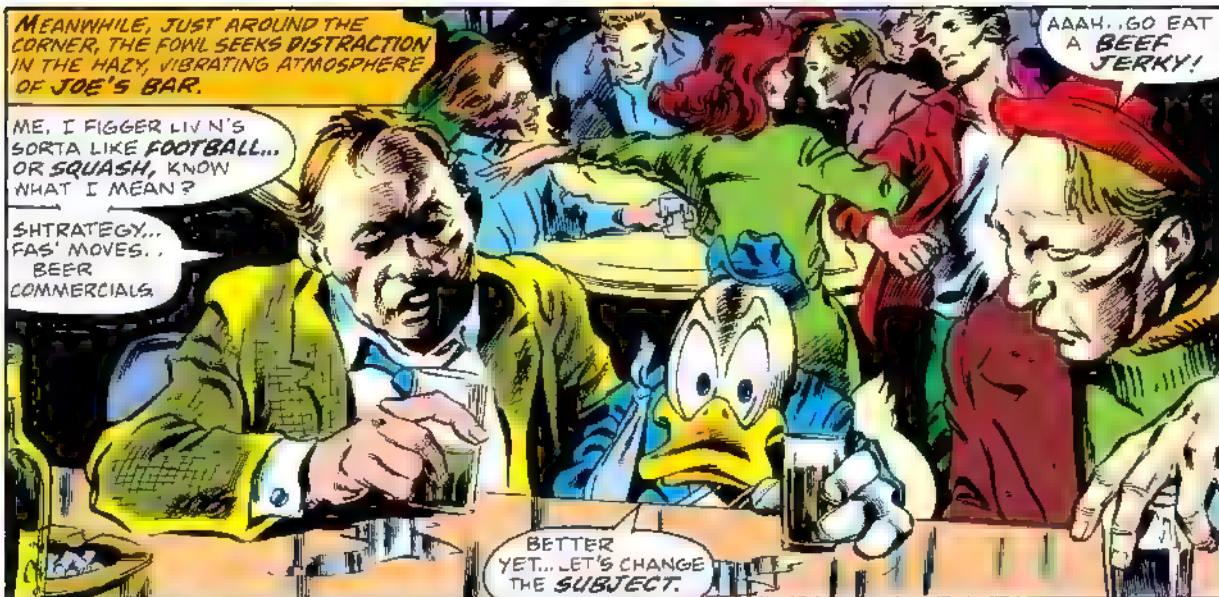
LISTEN, GET SOME REST NOW, HUH? WE CAN TALK SOME MORE IN THE MORNING IF YOU WANT

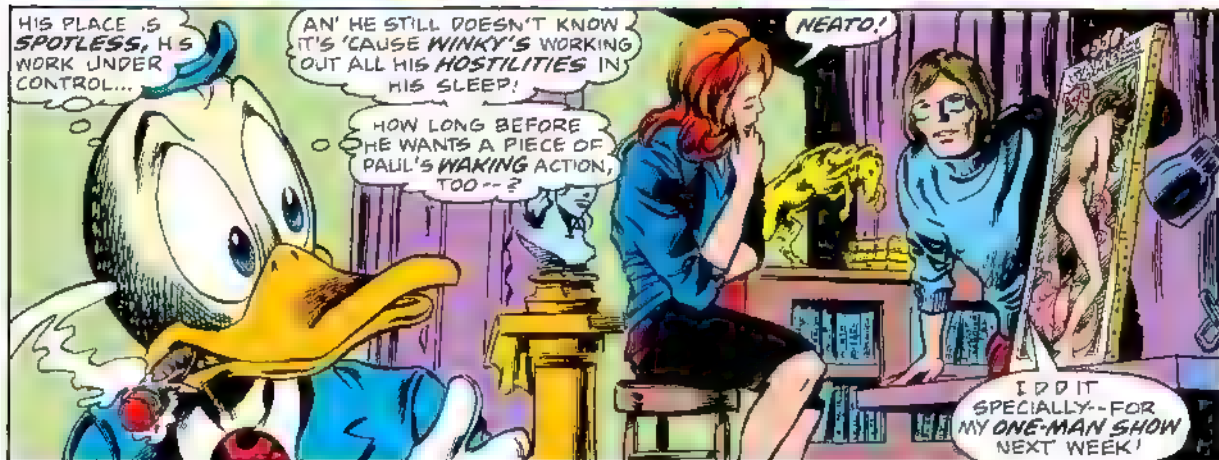
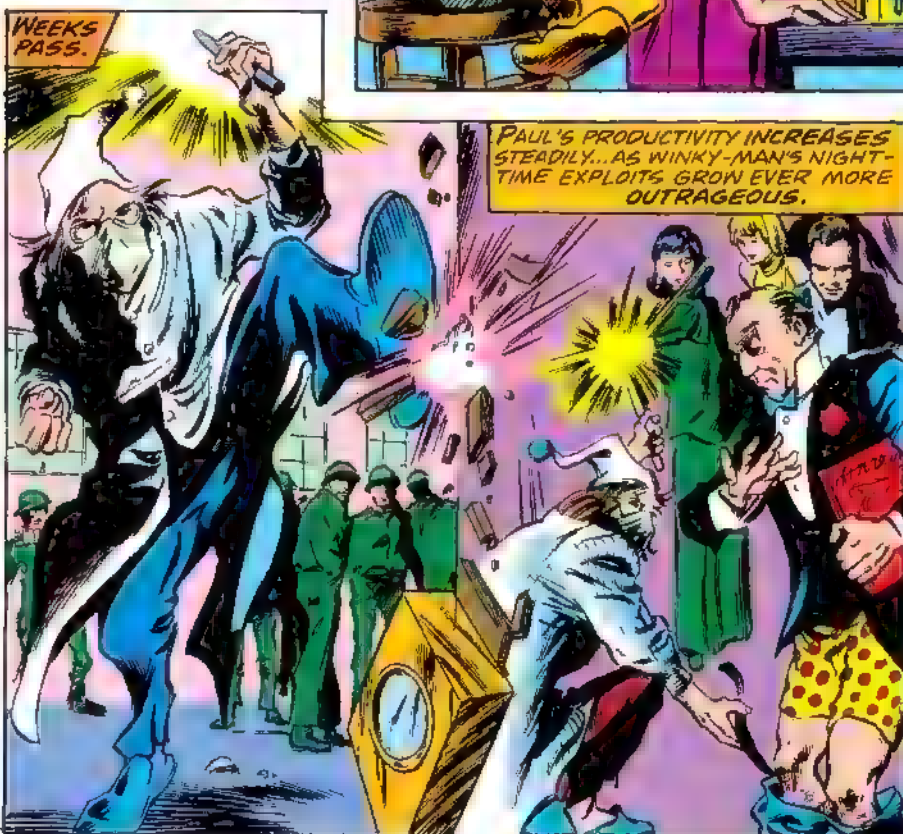
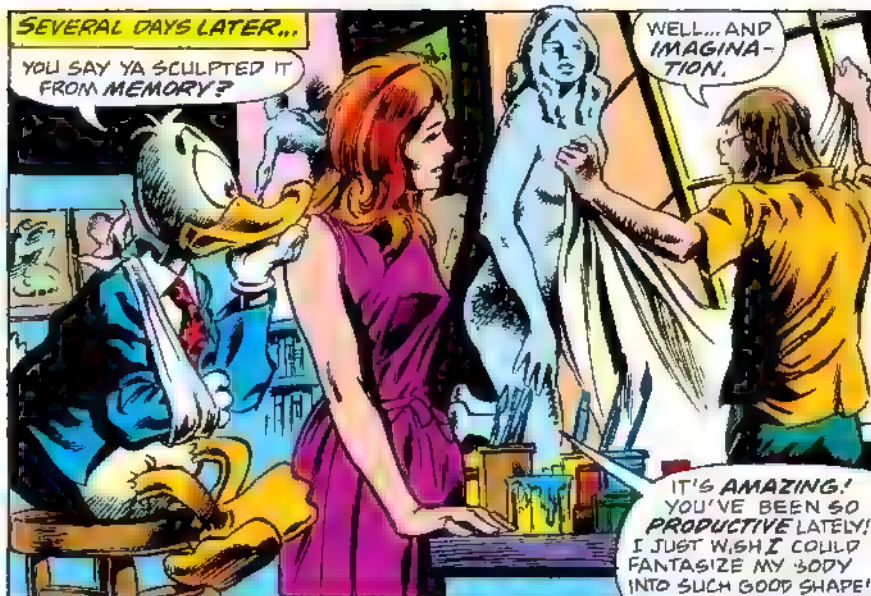
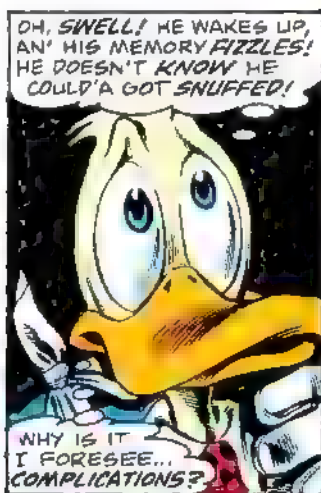
THE PERFECT...YES... IN THE MORN'G... SURE, IN THE MORNING...

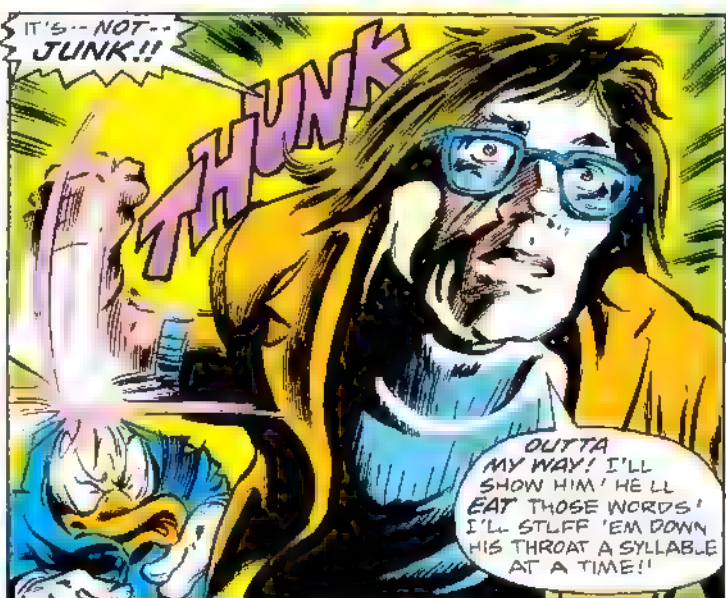
BUT UNDER THE COVER OF DARKNESS...YES... THE PERFECT... GOODNIGHT, BEY.

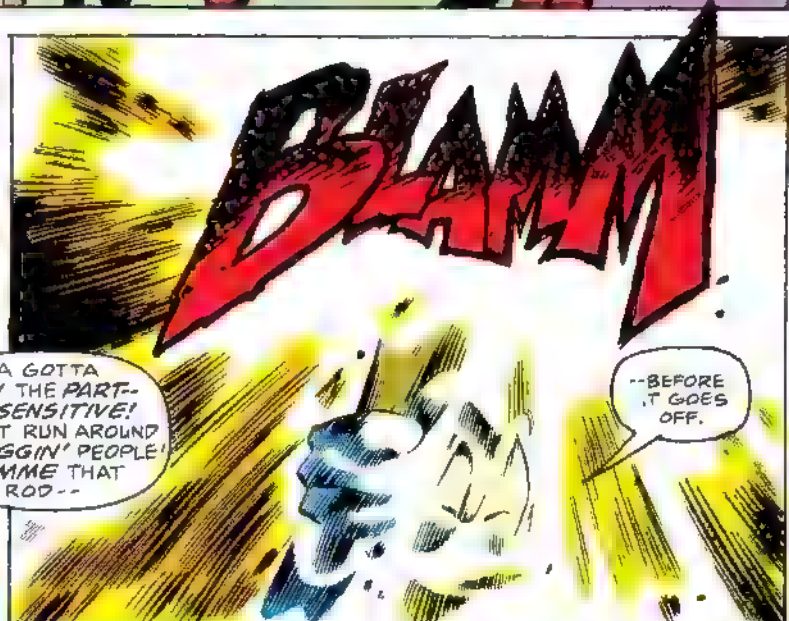
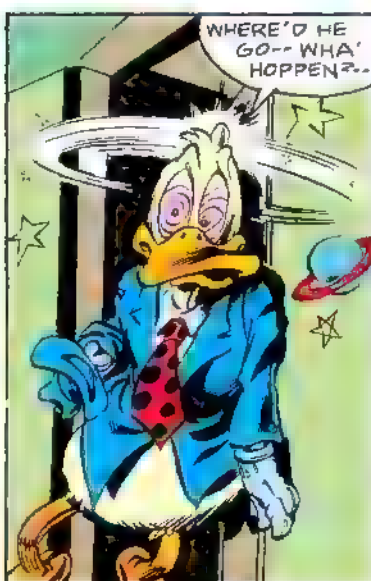
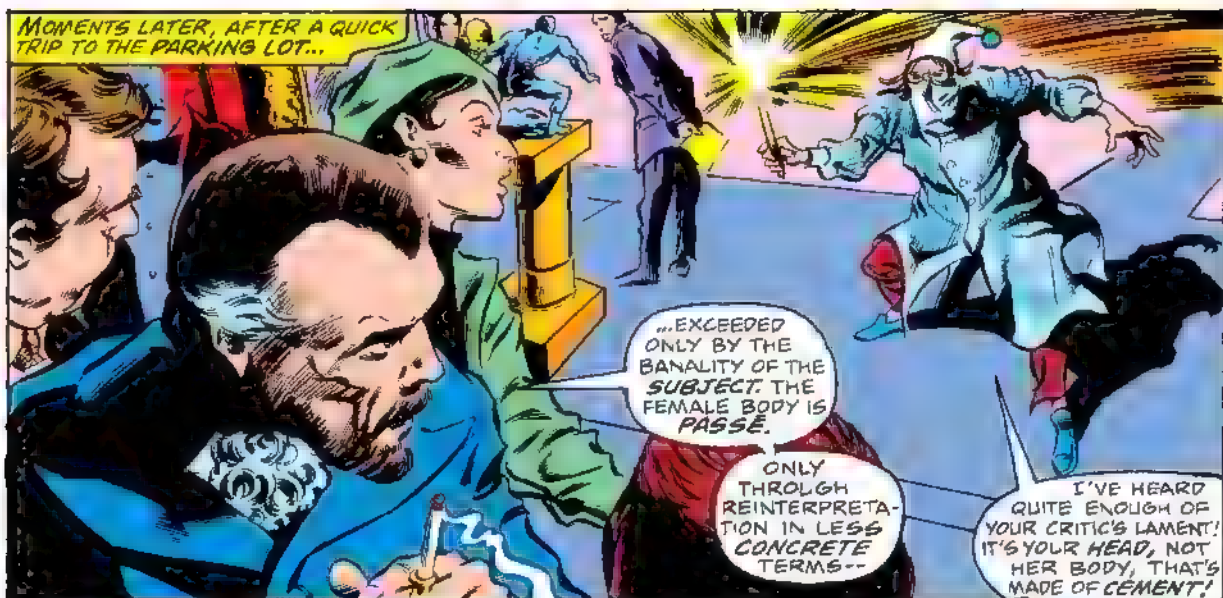


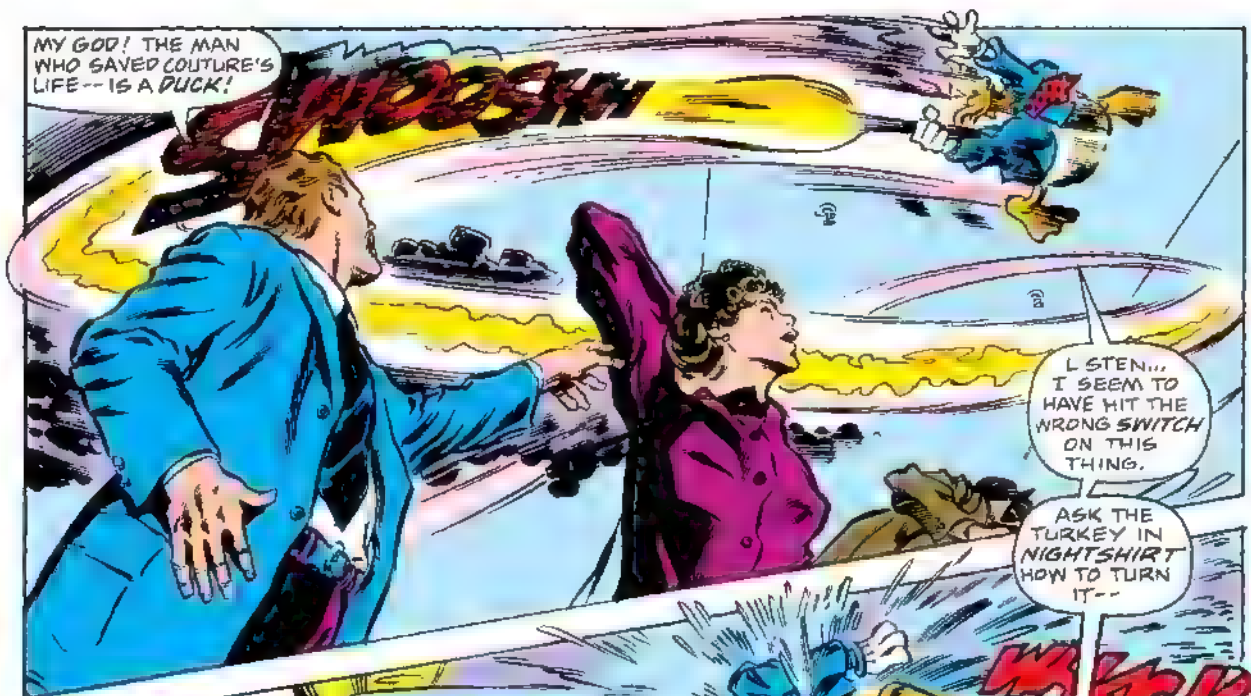












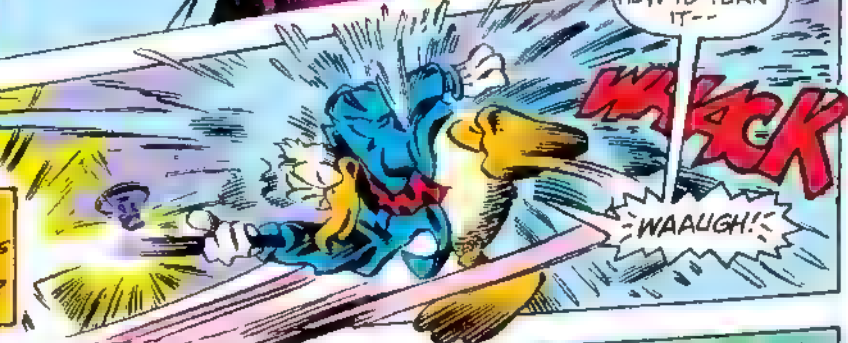
MY GOD! THE MAN WHO SAVED COUTURE'S LIFE-- IS A DUCK!

LISTEN... I SEEM TO HAVE HIT THE WRONG SWITCH ON THIS THING.

ASK THE TURKEY IN NIGHTSHIRT HOW TO TURN IT--

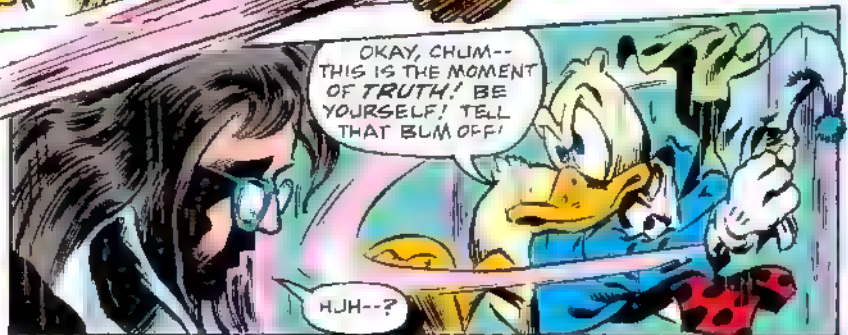
THE FLAILING FOWL'S PLEA GOES UNHEARD AMID THE CONFUSION, BUT FORTUITOUS FATE--IN THE FORM OF A HEAT-SENSITIVE SPRINKLER SYSTEM--SAVES THE DAY.

THE FIERY CANDLE ELICITS A DOWNPOUR--AND THE COLD WATER NOT ONLY DOWNS THE DUCK, BUT DRENCHES PAUL AWAKE!



OKAY, CHUM-- THIS IS THE MOMENT OF TRUTH! BE YOURSELF! TELL THAT BUM OFF!

HJH--?

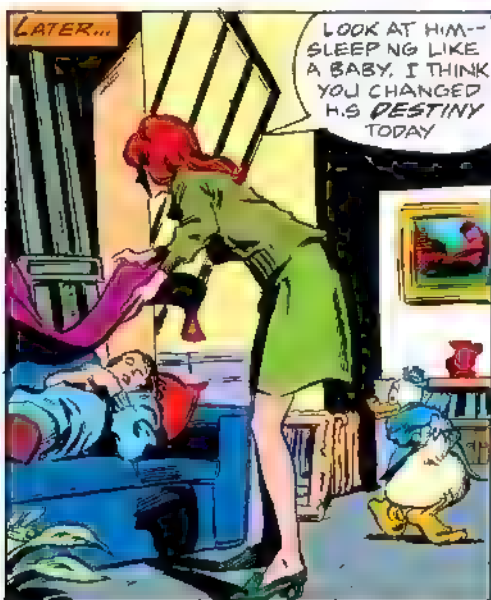
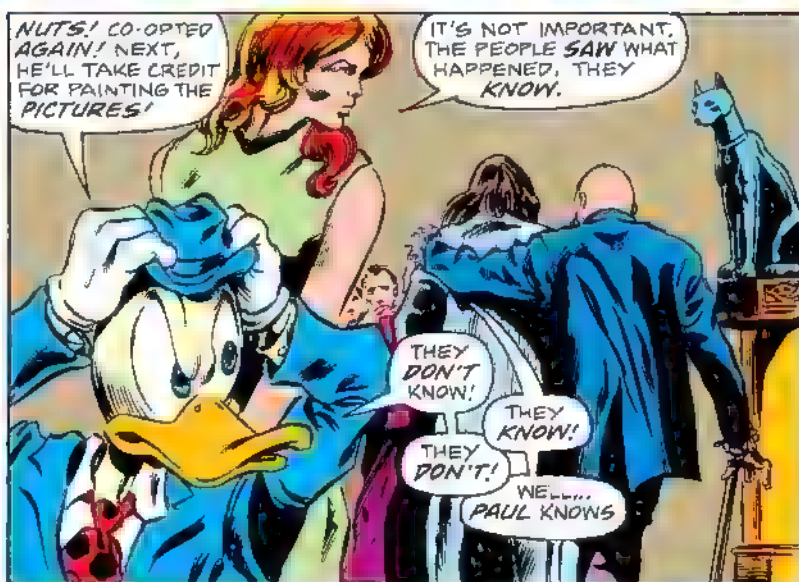


HE'S A PHONY!



YOU'RE A PHONY! YOU WOULDN'T KNOW ART IF IT CAME UP AND BIT THE PSORIASIS OFF YOUR ELBOW!

I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW, MR. SAME, THAT I AM AN AUTHORITY!



HOWARD
THE DUCK

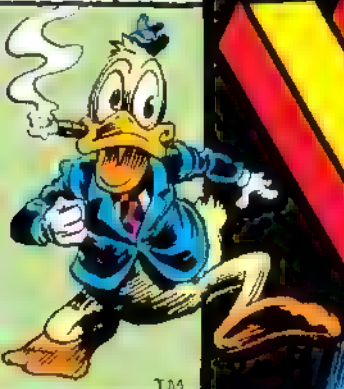
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TRAPPED IN A WORLD HE NEVER MADE!

HOWARD THE DUCK™



ARENA
OF NO
RETURN

WAAAUGH!

IT'S THE FEATHERED
FURY VERSUS THE MAN-
MOUNTAIN-- KLOUT!



From the time of his hatching, he was...different. A potent ally brilliant scholar who dreaded the structured environment of school, he educated himself in the streets, taking whatever work was available, formulating his philosophy of self from what he learned of the world about him. And then the Cosmic Axis shifted...and that world *changed*. Suddenly, he was stranded in a universe he could not fathom. Without warning, he became a strange fowl in an even stranger land.

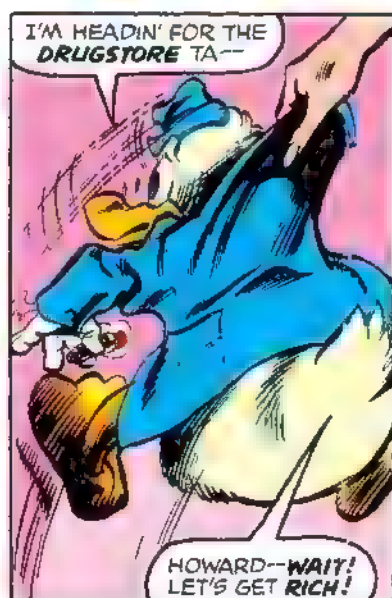
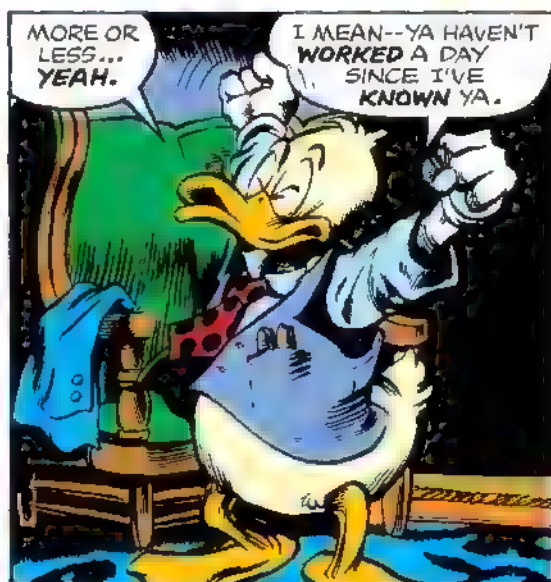
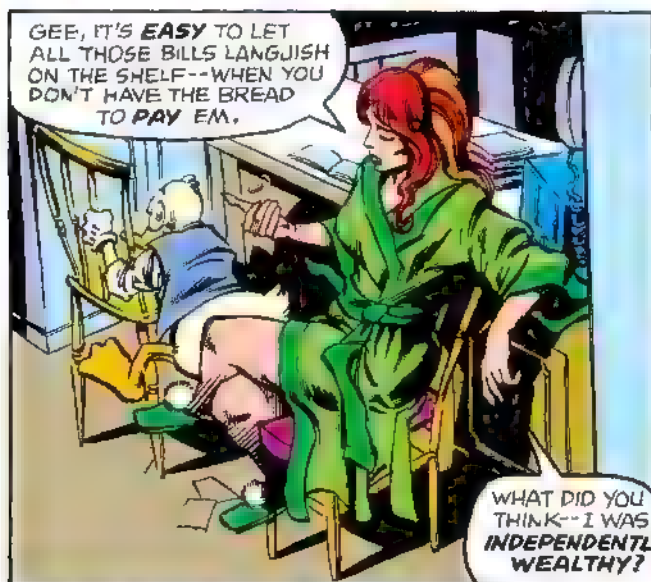
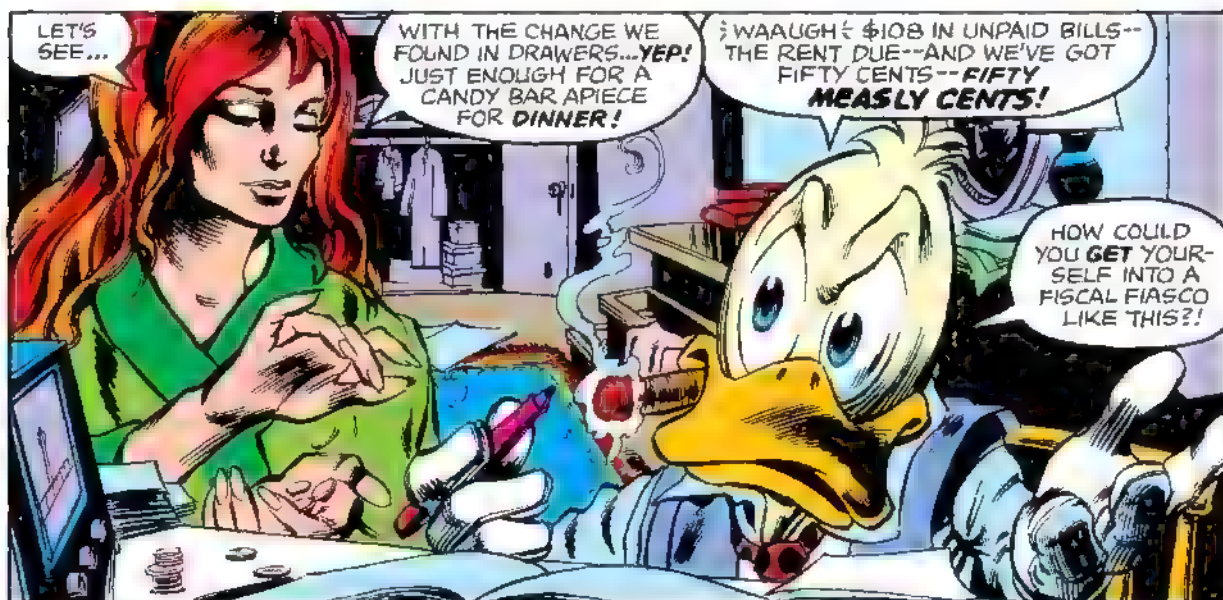
Stan Lee PRESENTS: HOWARD THE DUCK!™

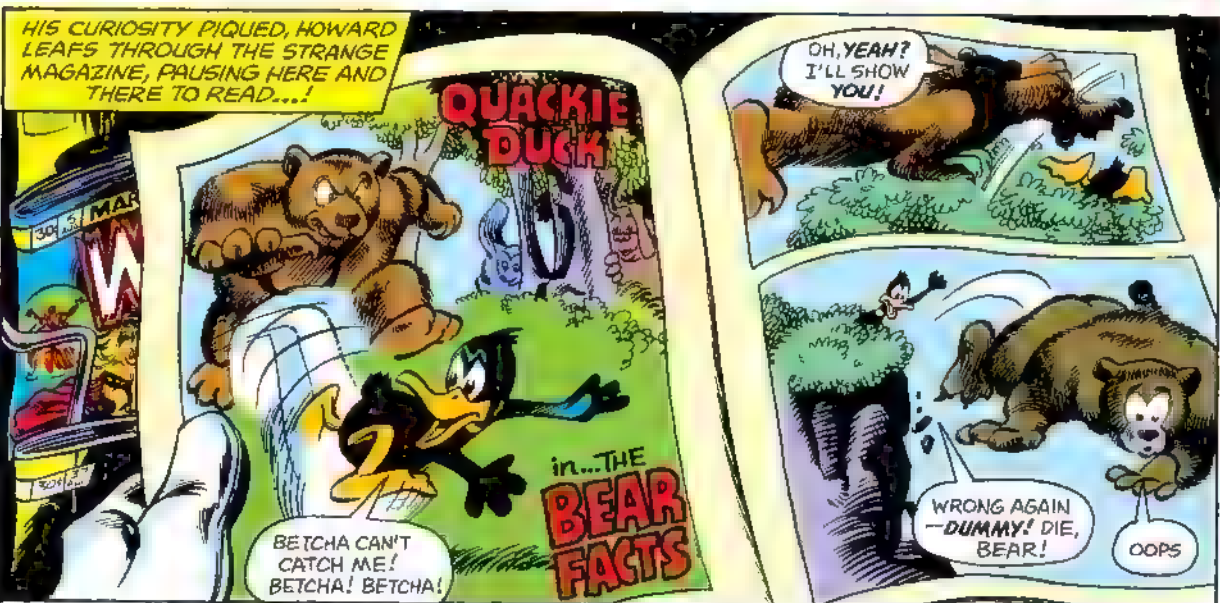
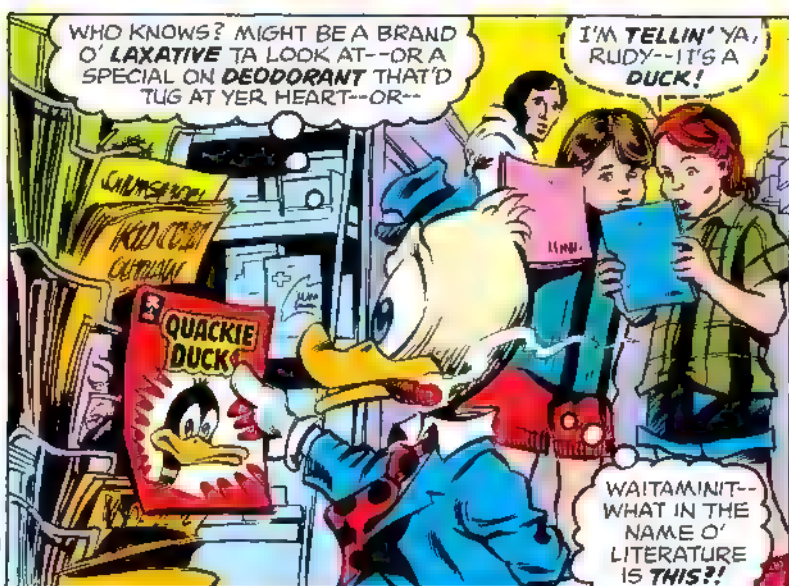
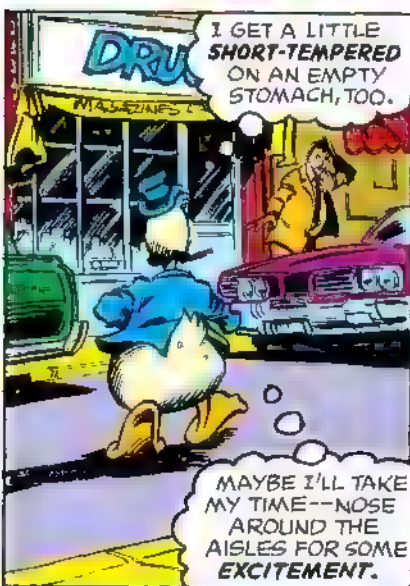
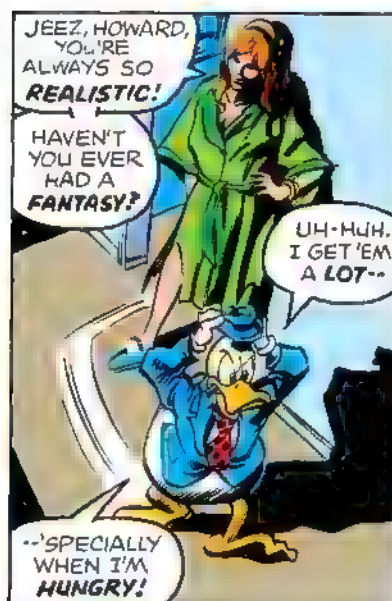
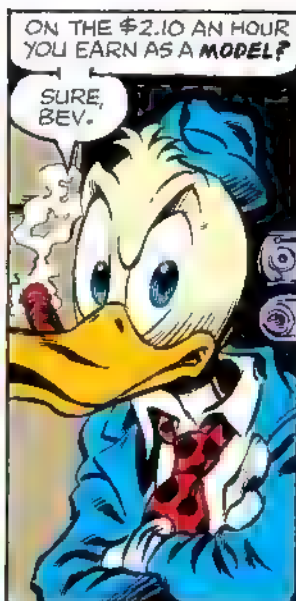
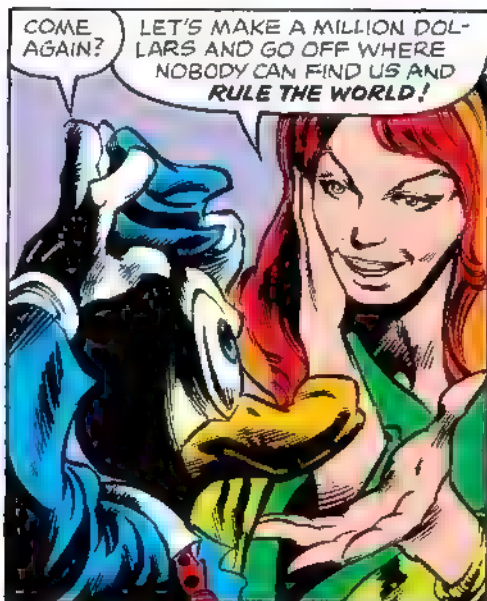
STEVE GERBER [AVARICIOUS WRITER] GENE COLAN [PENURIOUS PENCILLER] STEVE LEIALOHA [INSATIABLE INKER] ARCHIE GOODWIN [TIGHTFISTED EDITOR]

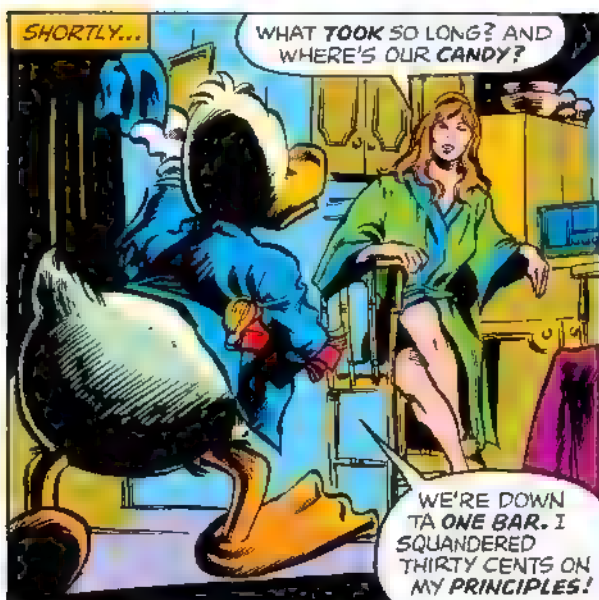
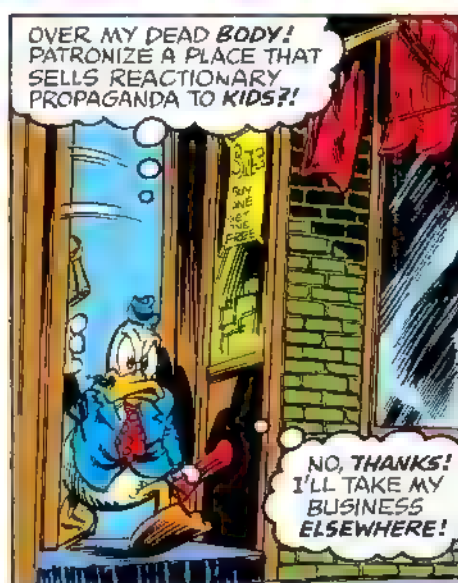
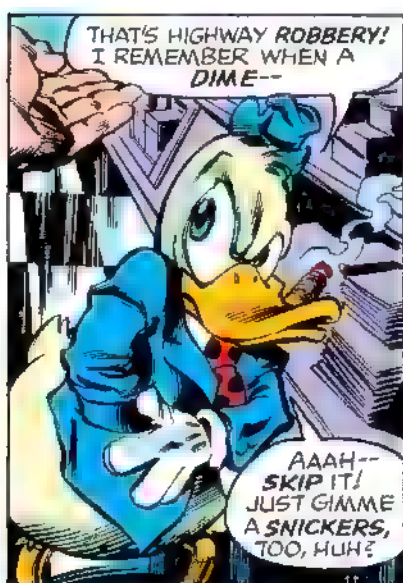
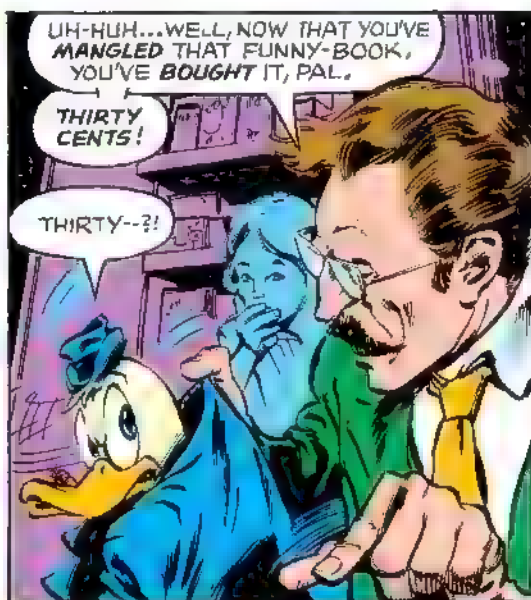
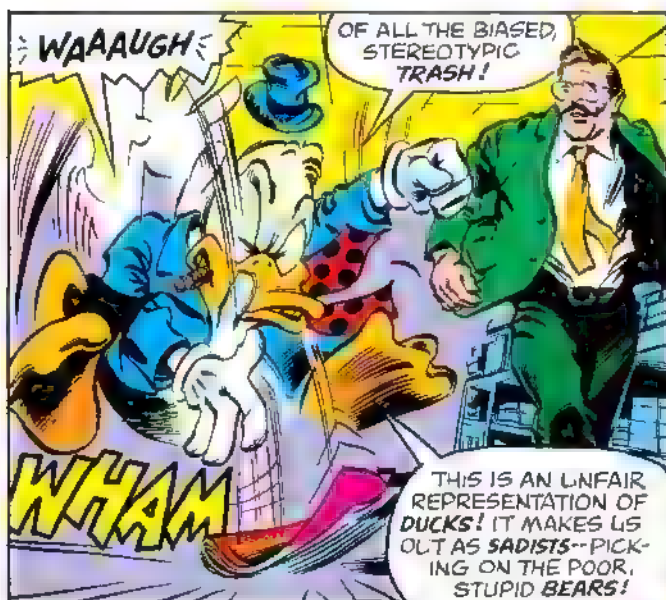
WELL, THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE ARE FREE -- BUT YOU CAN GIVE 'EM TO THE BIRDS AN' BEES --

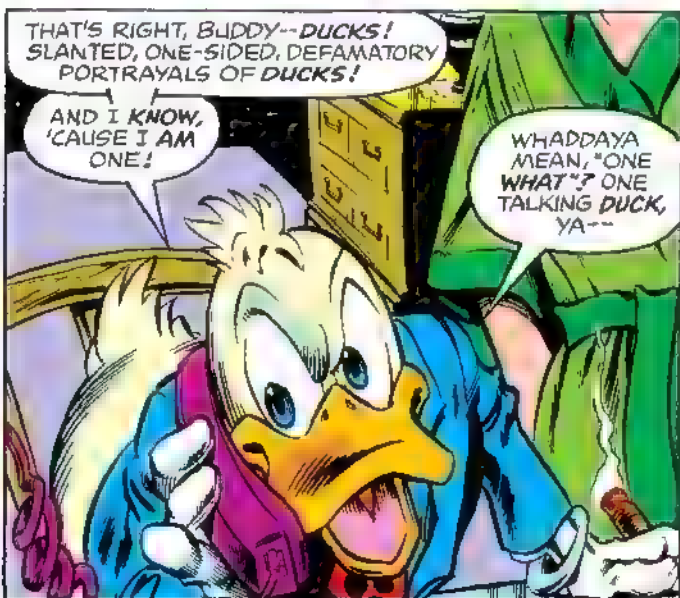
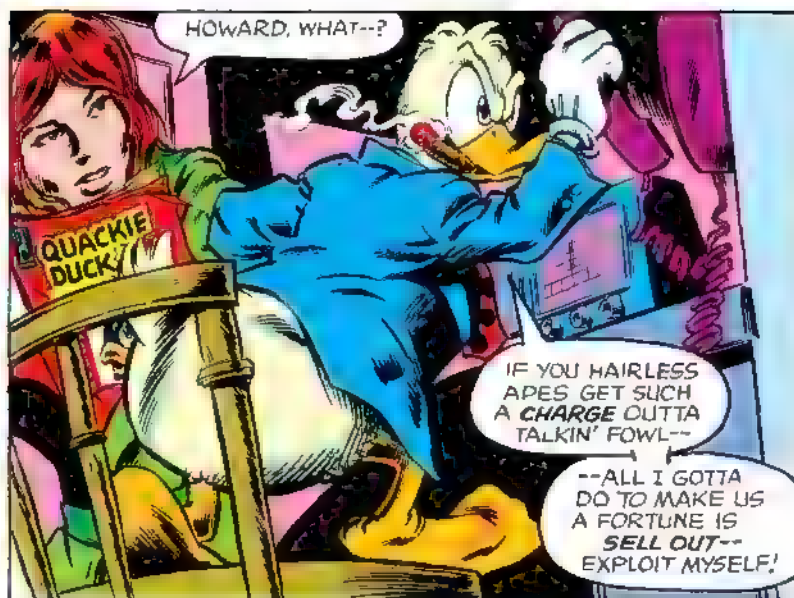
I WANT MO-O-O-ONEY!

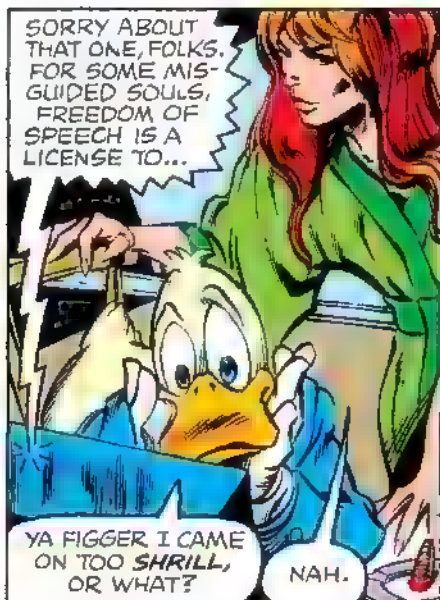








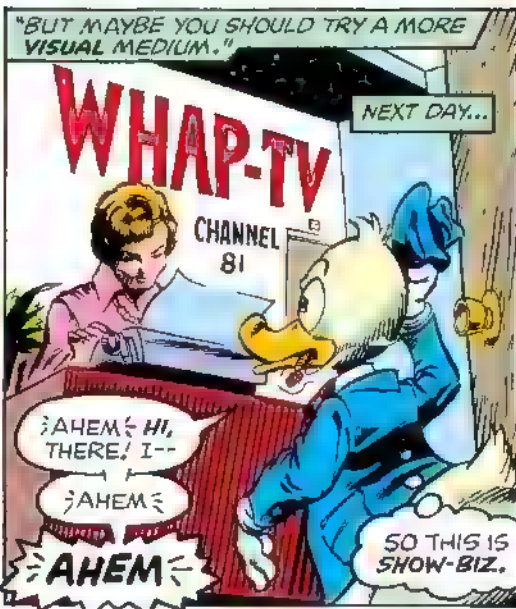




SORRY ABOUT THAT ONE, FOLKS. FOR SOME MISGUIDED SOULS, FREEDOM OF SPEECH IS A LICENSE TO...

YA FIGGER I CAME ON TOO *SHRILL*, OR WHAT?

NAH.



"BUT MAYBE YOU SHOULD TRY A MORE VISUAL MEDIUM."

NEXT DAY...

HAHEM HI, THERE! I--
HAHEM

HAHEM

SO THIS IS SHOW-BIZ.



WHAM

June 25, 1978
According to
the Star
and... his
letter
about
the
show

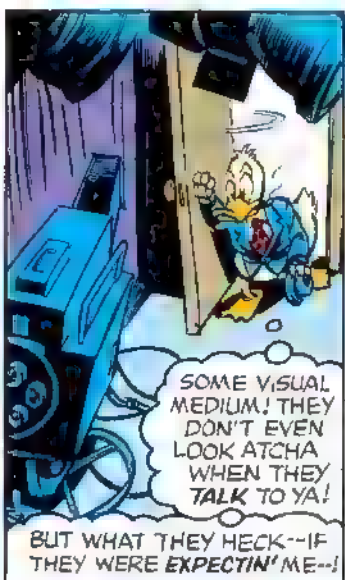


OH. THE NEW DUCK.

STUDIO "B"--THAT WAY. AND YOU BETTER GET A MOVE ON.

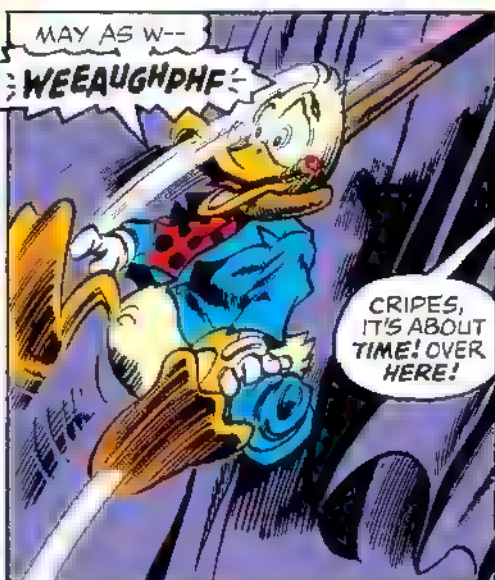
CHANNEL 81

HUH? OH! SURE, DOLL.



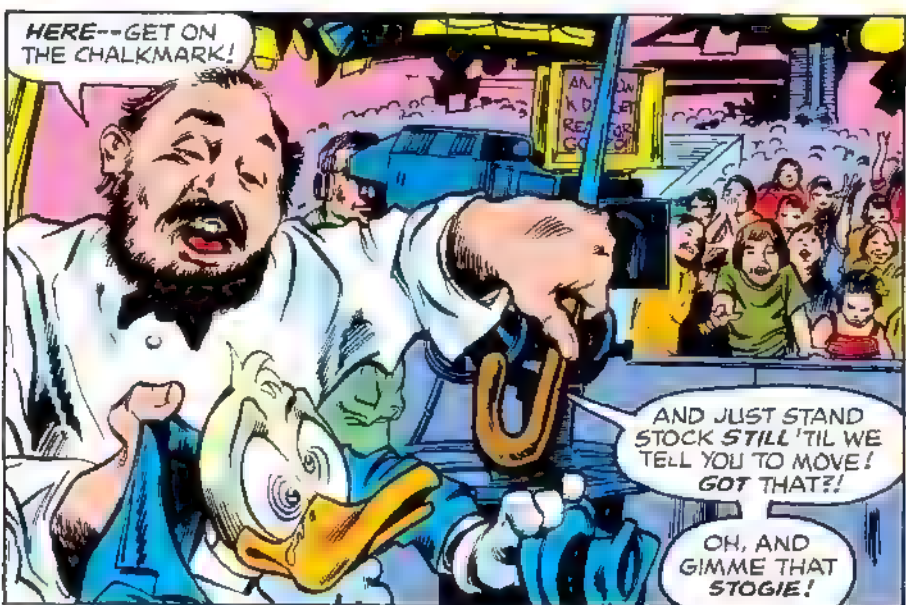
SOME VISUAL MEDIUM! THEY DON'T EVEN LOOK ATCHA WHEN THEY TALK TO YA!

BUT WHAT THEY HECK--IF THEY WERE EXPECTIN' ME--!



MAY AS W--
WEEAUGHPHF

CRIPES, IT'S ABOUT TIME! OVER HERE!



HERE--GET ON THE CHALKMARK!

AND JUST STAND STOCK STILL 'TIL WE TELL YOU TO MOVE! GOT THAT?!

OH, AND GIMME THAT STOGIE!

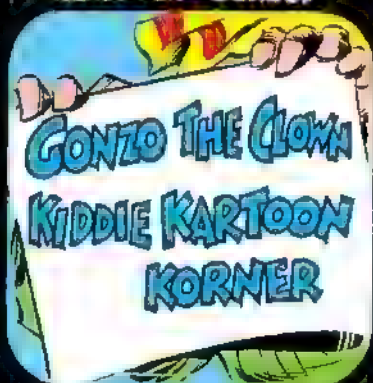


WHAT'RE YOU--TRYIN' TO CORRUPT THESE KIDS? GONZO'S GOT AN IMAGE TO PROTECT!

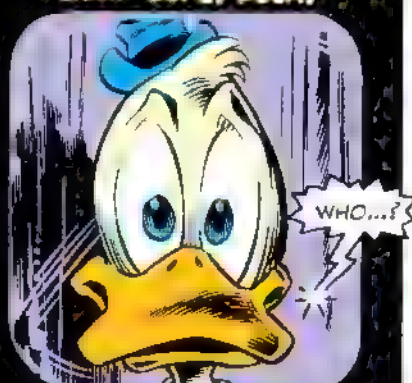
GONZO...?



"AND NOW, KIDS, GET READY FOR--GONZO!"



"FEATURING YOUR FAVORITE FEATHER-BRAIN--DOPEY DUCK!"

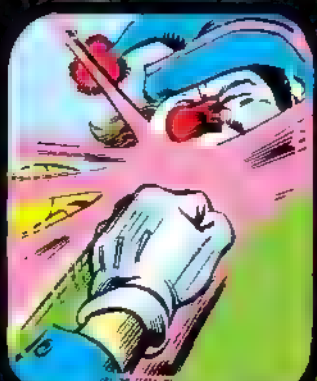


"POOR DOPEY, HUM, KIDS? ALWAYS GETTING HIT WITH THOSE PIES! ISN'T HE FUNNY?"

"NOT HALF AS FUNNY AS YOU'RE GONNA BE WITHOUT TEETH, YA TURKEY!!"



"HEY--WHA--AAAGH!--"



"HALP! THIS DWARF'S TRYING TO KILL ME!"

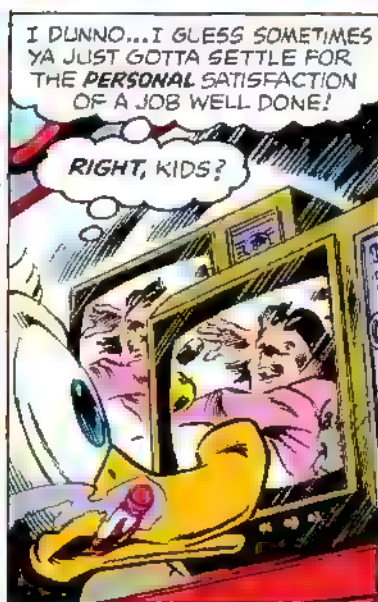
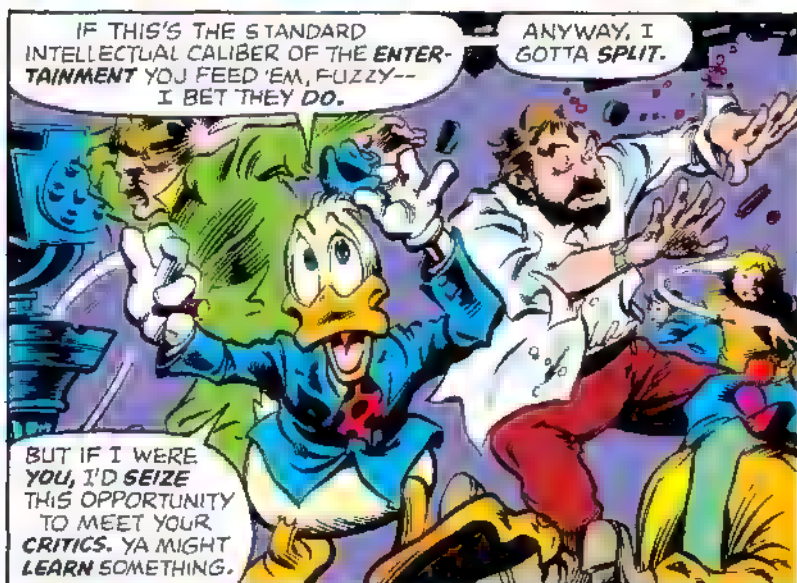
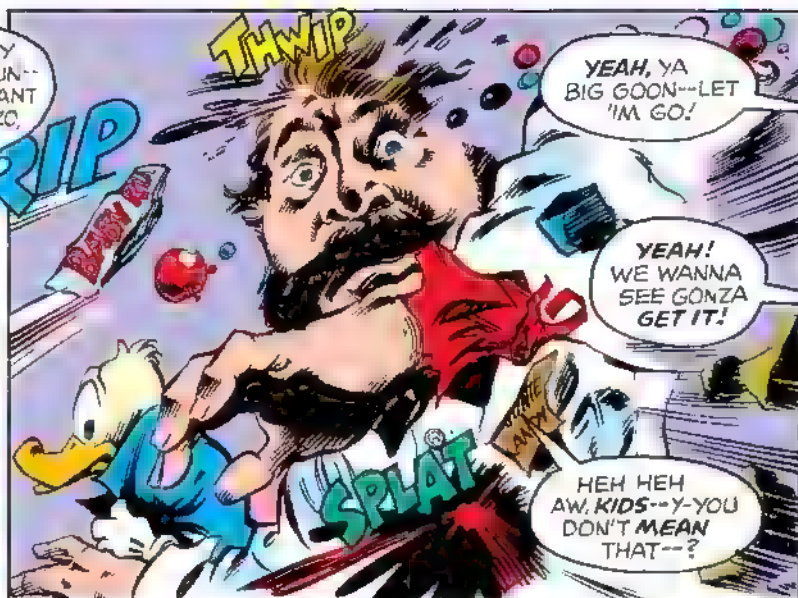
"YAY! ATTA WAY, DOPEY! BEAT THE LIVING SPIT OUTTA THAT MEALY-MOUTHED CLOWN!"

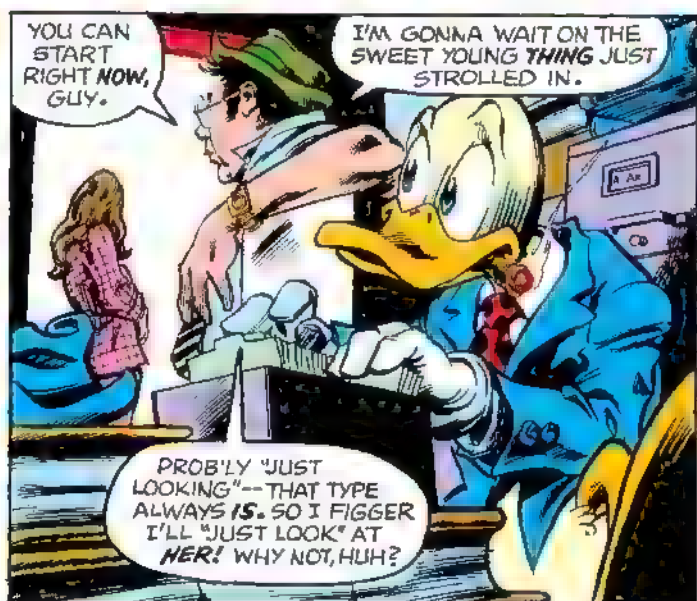
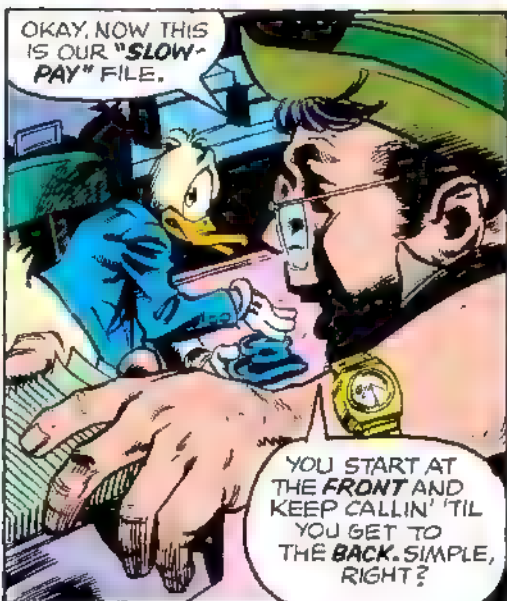
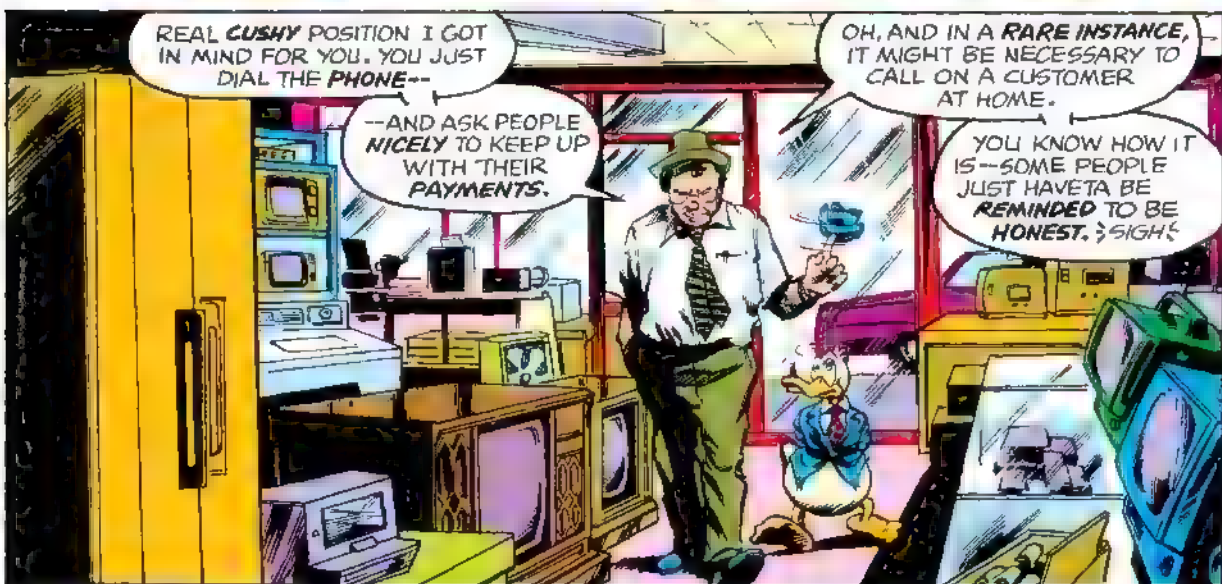
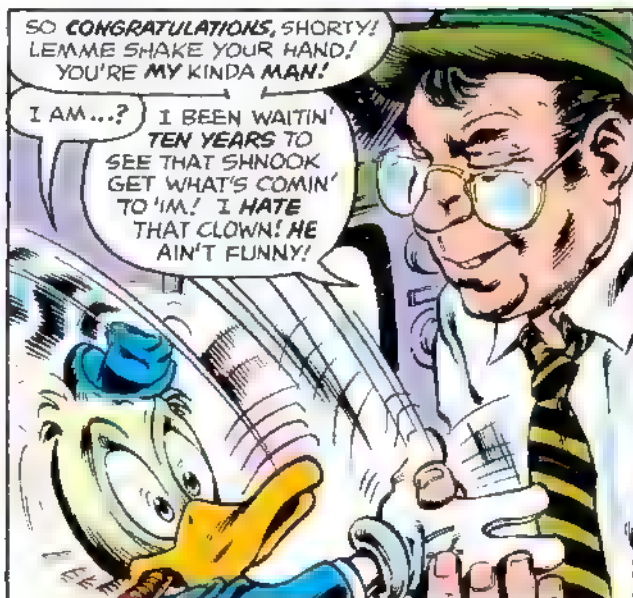


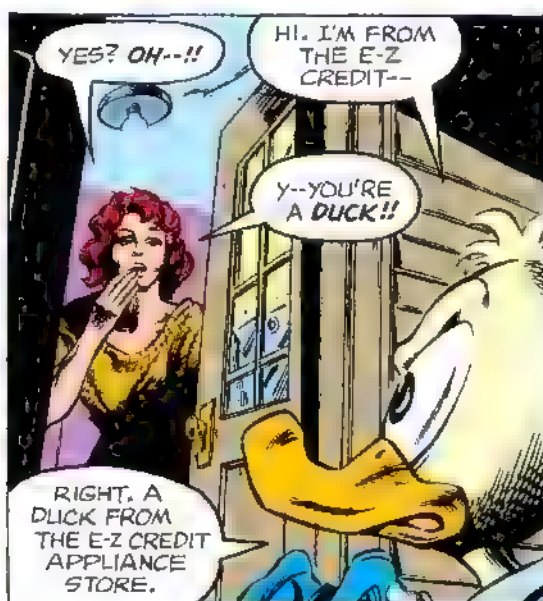
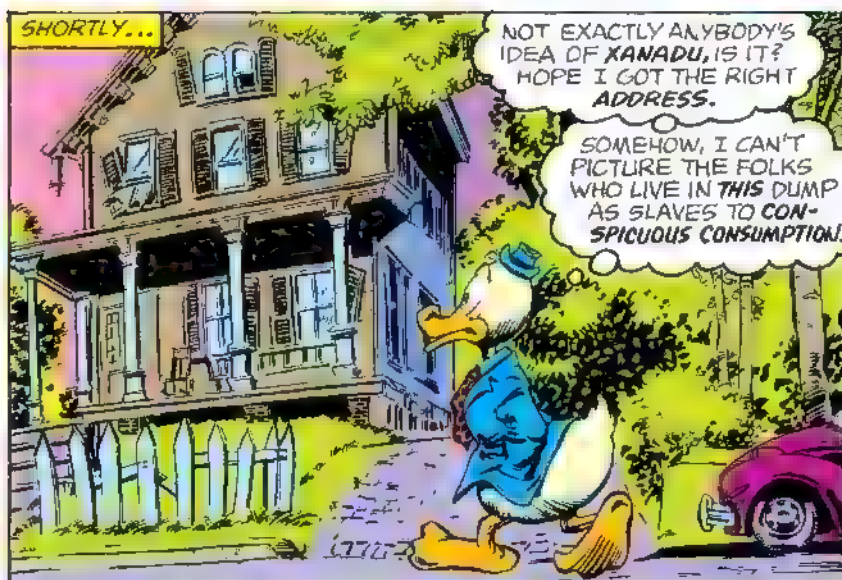
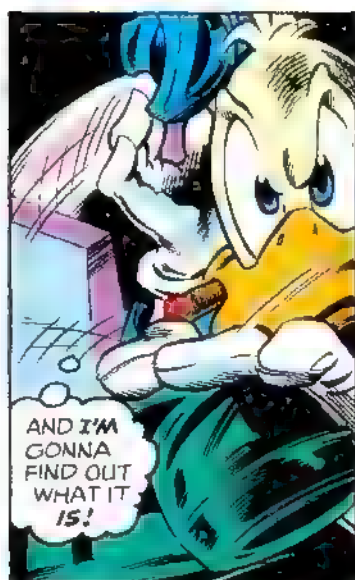
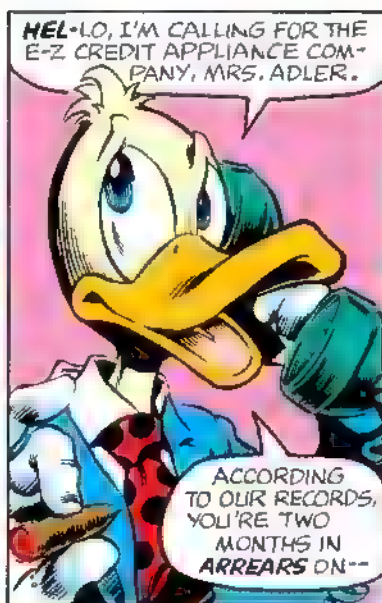
"HEY, NO FAIR! WATCH OUT, DOPEY! THE GUY WITH THE BEARD'S SNEAKIN' UP ON YA!"

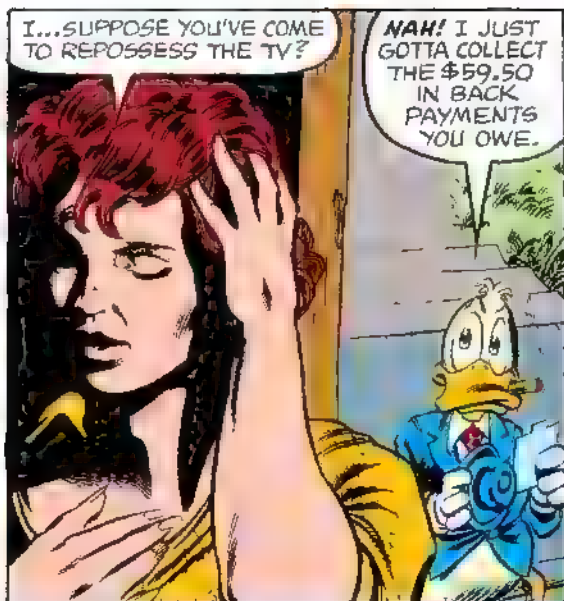
"HEE-HEE, HEE-HEE, HEE-HEE."

"LOOKIT! GONZO'S GOT A NOSEBLEED!"









I...SUPPOSE YOU'VE COME TO REPOSSESS THE TV?

NAH! I JUST GOTTA COLLECT THE \$59.50 IN BACK PAYMENTS YOU OWE.



GUESS YOU'LL HAVETA TAKE THE SET, THEN. I AIN'T GOT THE MONEY.

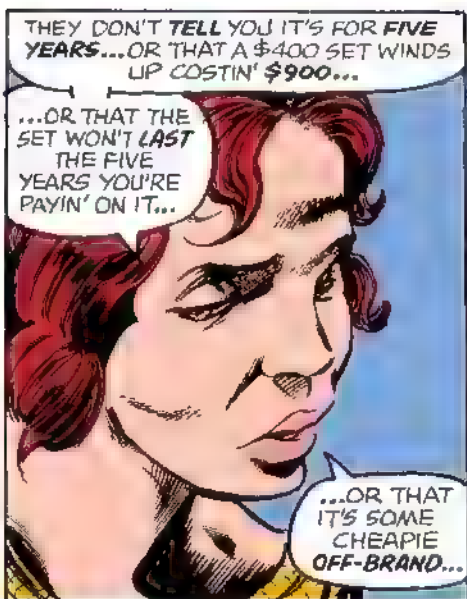
HOPE YOU CAN EXPLAIN IT TO THEM.

3WAAUGH! UH, LOOK... I REALIZE IT'S NONE O' MY BUSINESS, BUT... WHY'D YA BUY THE THING, IF--

I MEAN... WITH YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES SO TIGHT, AN' ALL?

I DIDN'T BUY IT--BOBBY DID. HE'S MY HUSBAND--WHO I AIN'T SEEN FOR A YEAR AND A HALF.

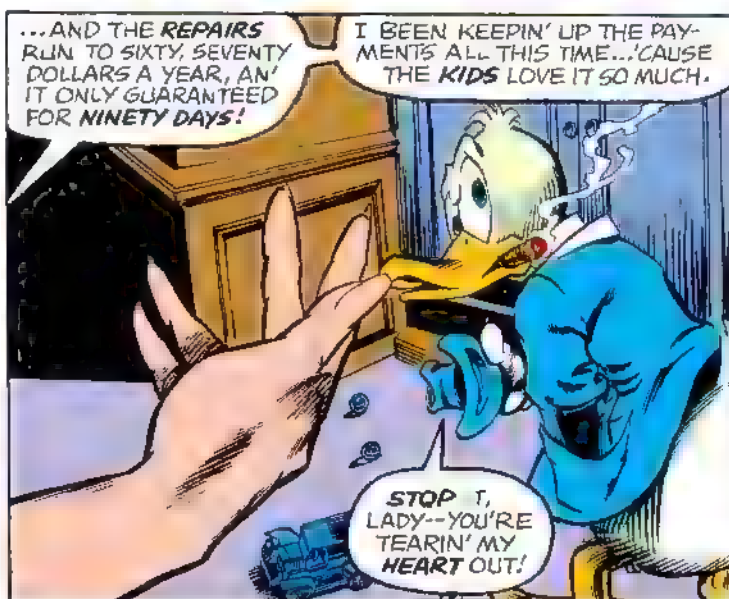
HE BELIEVED THE ADS, Y'KNOW? "COLOR TV FOR 50¢ A DAY"?



THEY DON'T TELL YOU IT'S FOR FIVE YEARS...OR THAT A \$400 SET WINDS UP COSTIN' \$900...

...OR THAT THE SET WON'T LAST THE FIVE YEARS YOU'RE PAYIN' ON IT...

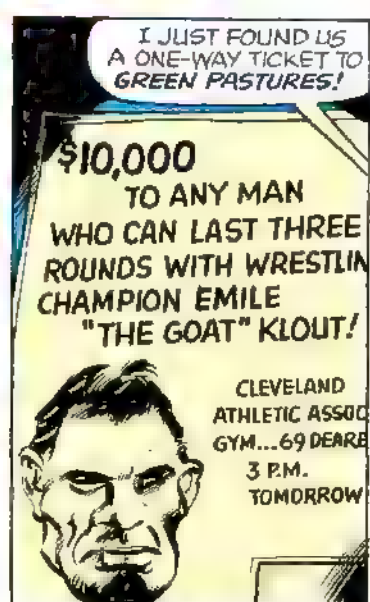
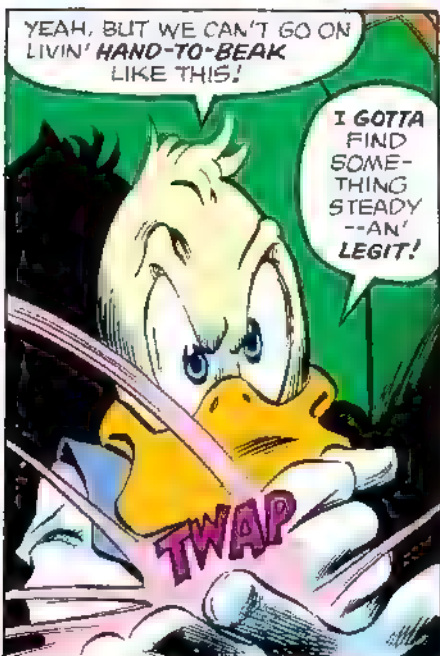
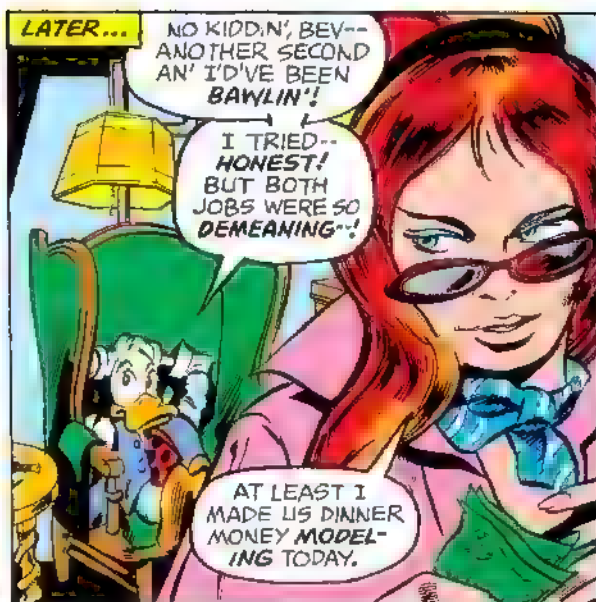
...OR THAT IT'S SOME CHEAPIE OFF-BRAND...

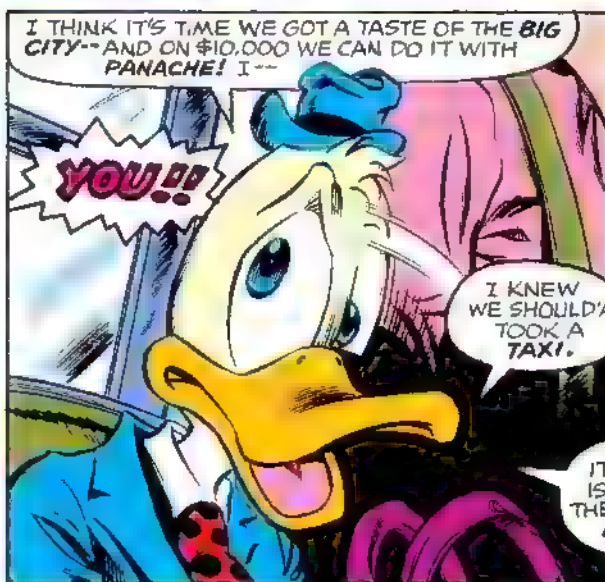
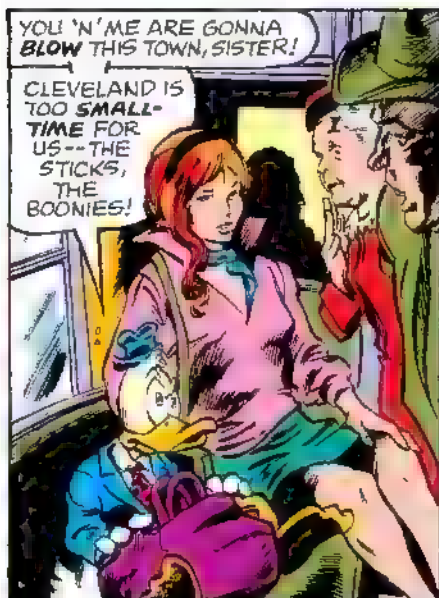
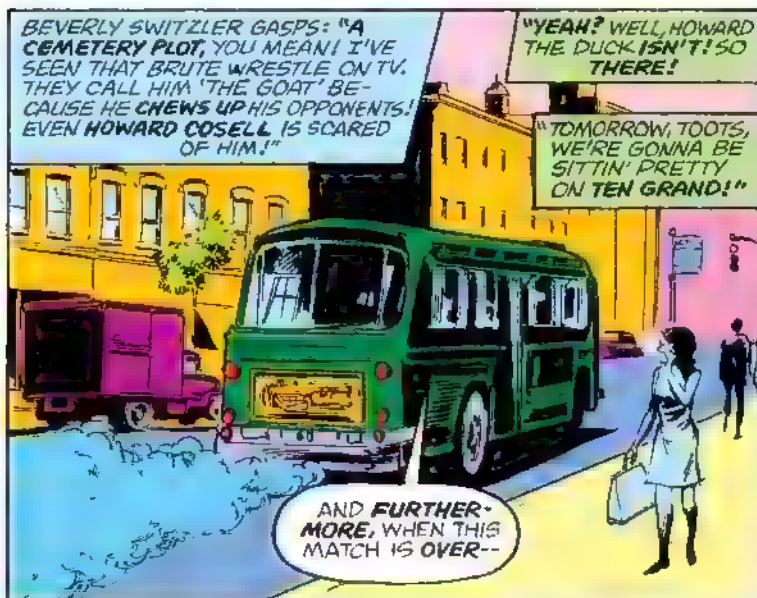


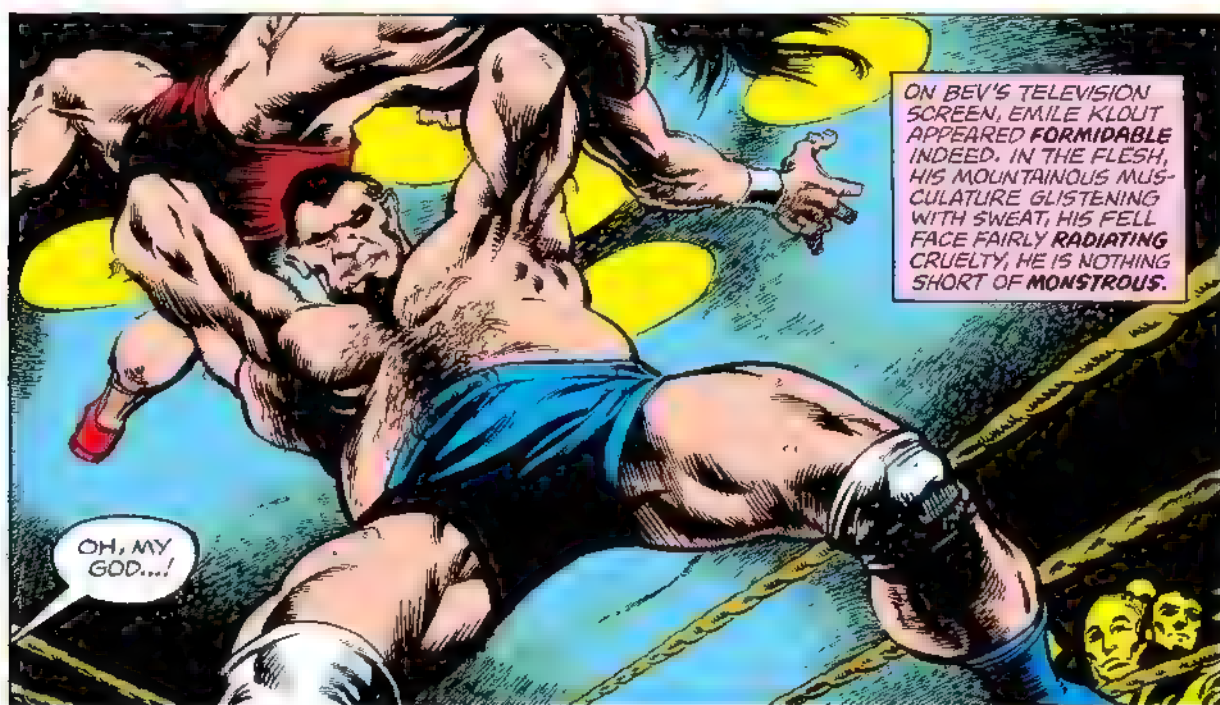
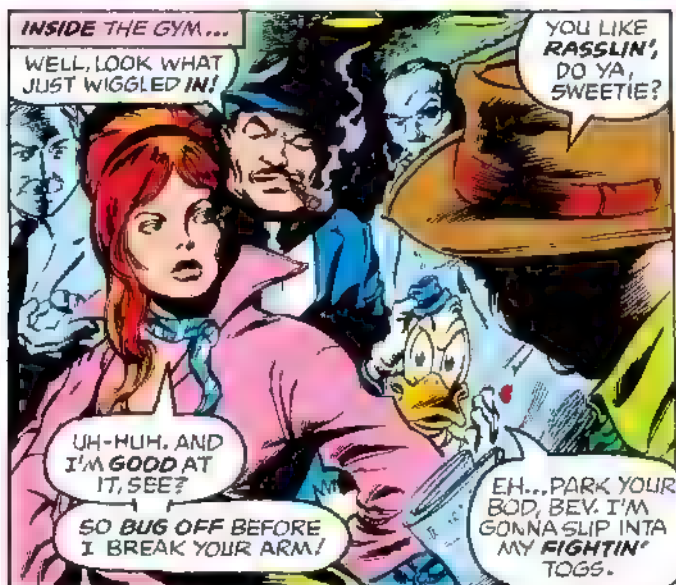
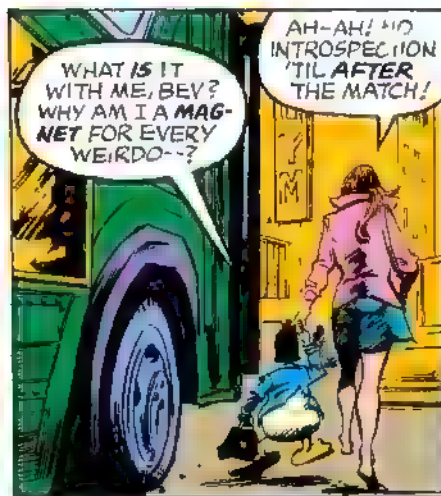
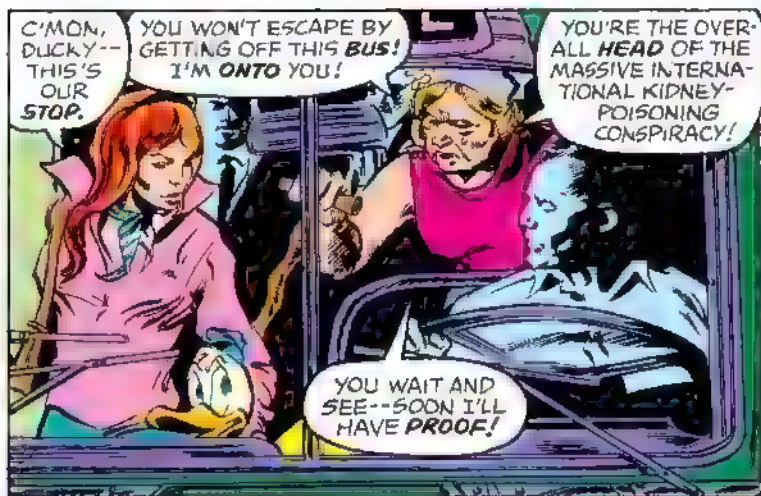
...AND THE REPAIRS RUN TO SIXTY, SEVENTY DOLLARS A YEAR, AN' IT ONLY GUARANTEED FOR NINETY DAYS!

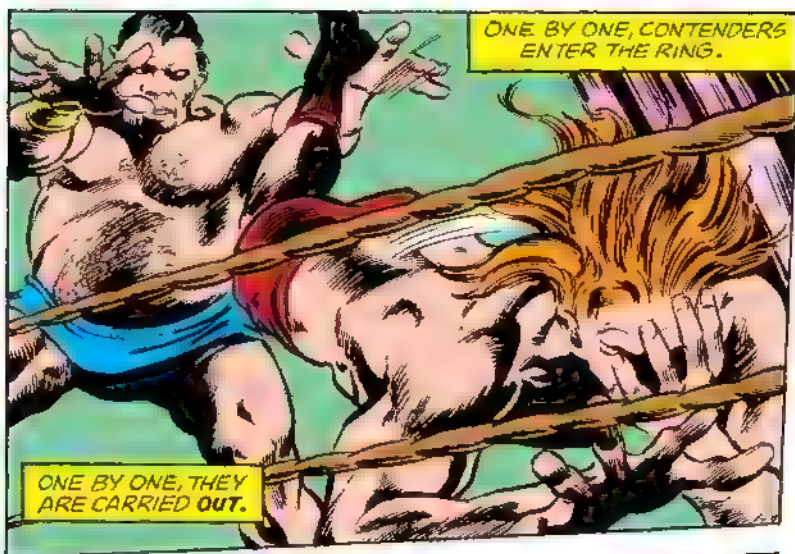
I BEEN KEEPIN' UP THE PAYMENTS ALL THIS TIME...CAUSE THE KIDS LOVE IT SO MUCH.

STOP T, LADY--YOU'RE TEARIN' MY HEART OUT!









ONE BY ONE, CONTENDERS ENTER THE RING.

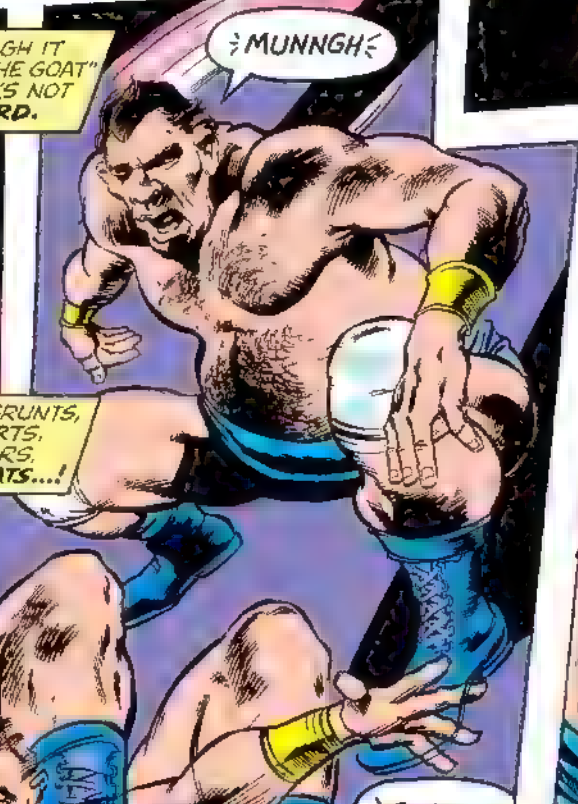
ONE BY ONE, THEY ARE CARRIED OUT.



IN A MATCH LASTING 37 SECONDS--THE WINNER--EMILE "THE GOAT" KLOUT!

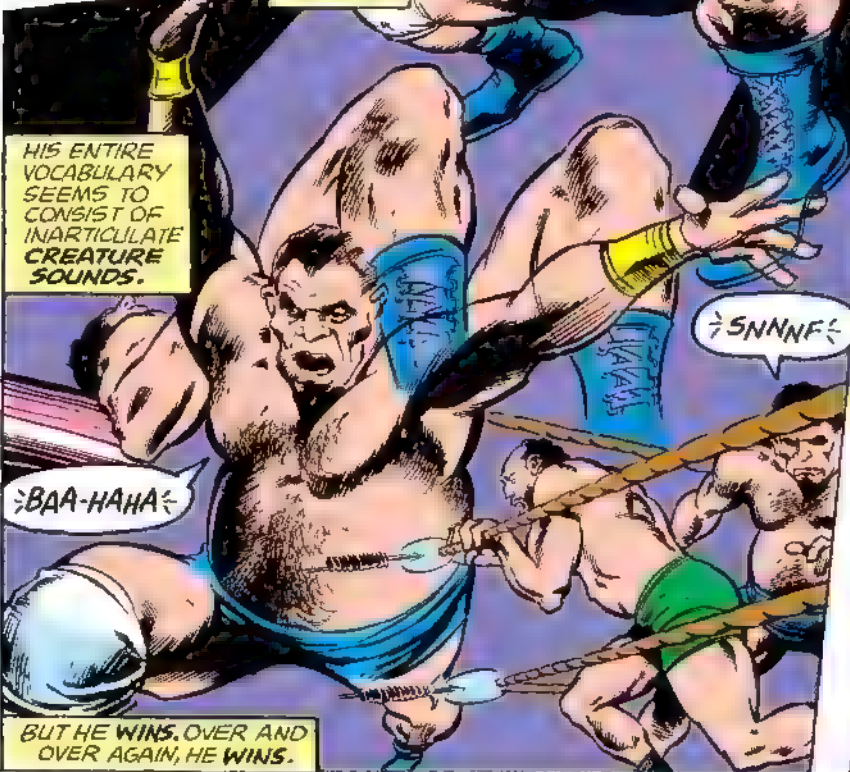


THROUGH IT ALL, "THE GOAT" SPEAKS NOT A WORD.



≡MUNNGH≡

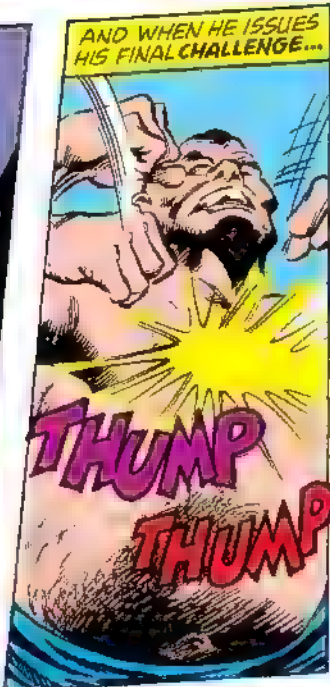
HE GRUNTS, SNORTS, ROARS, BLEATS....!



HIS ENTIRE VOCABULARY SEEMS TO CONSIST OF INARTICULATE CREATURE SOUNDS.

≡BAA-HAHA≡

BUT HE WINS, OVER AND OVER AGAIN, HE WINS.



AND WHEN HE ISSUES HIS FINAL CHALLENGE...

THUMP THUMP



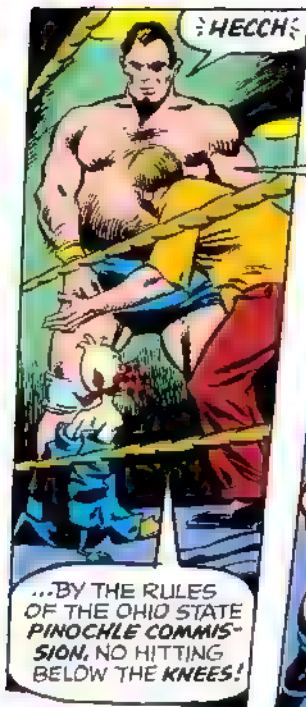
...THERE'S NOT A TAKER IN THE HOUSE.



EXCEPT ONE.

DON'T
TAKE YER
BOWS YET,
GRUESOME.

YOU BET
YOUR SWEET
CHEST-HAIRS
YOU GOT AN
OPPONENT!



HECCH

...BY THE RULES
OF THE OHIO STATE
PINOCHLE COMMIS-
SION, NO HITTING
BELOW THE KNEES!



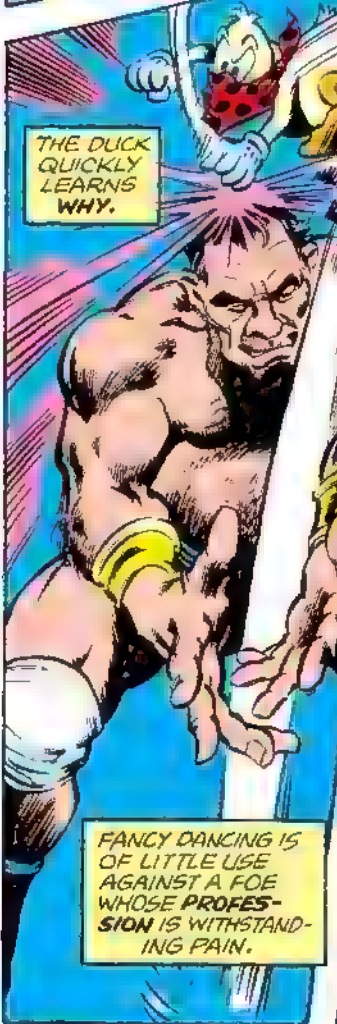
BONG

NOW, GET
TO YOUR CORNERS
AND WHEN THE
BELL RINGS--
KILL!!

I'LL TRYAN'
MAKE THIS
PAINLESS AS
POSSIBLE,
EMILE.

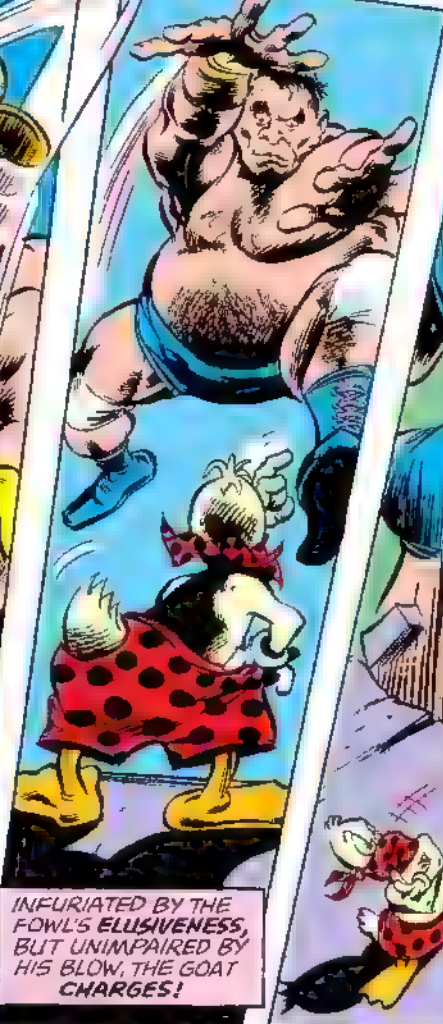
SEE, I
KNOW,
QUAK-
FU!

THE GOAT
CHORTLES.

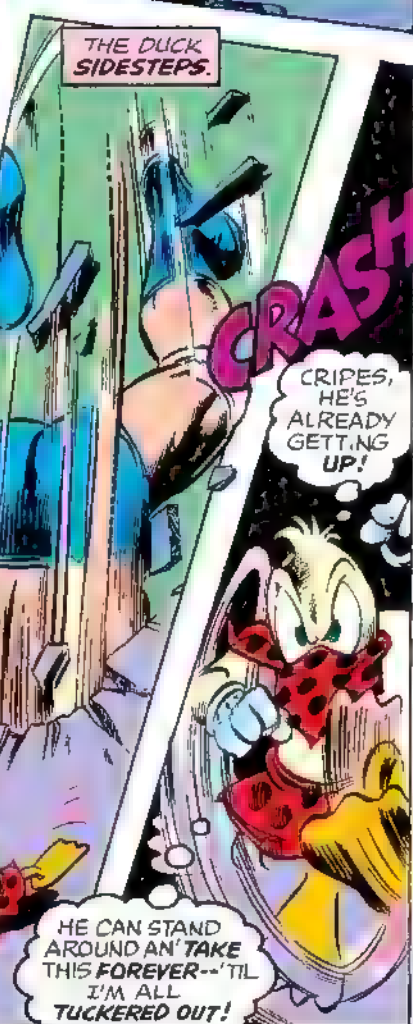


THE DUCK
QUICKLY
LEARNS
WHY.

FANCY DANCING IS
OF LITTLE USE
AGAINST A FOE
WHOSE PROFES-
SION IS WITHSTAND-
ING PAIN.



INFURIATED BY THE
FOWL'S ELUSIVENESS,
BUT UNIMPAIRED BY
HIS BLOW, THE GOAT
CHARGES!

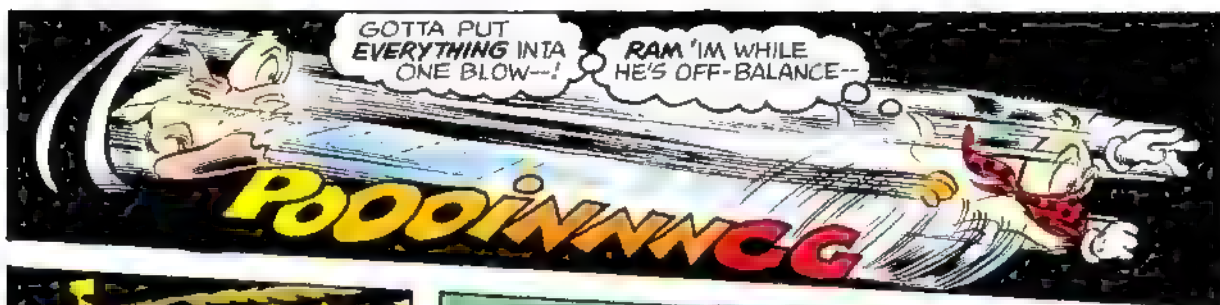


THE DUCK
SIDESTEPS.

CRASH

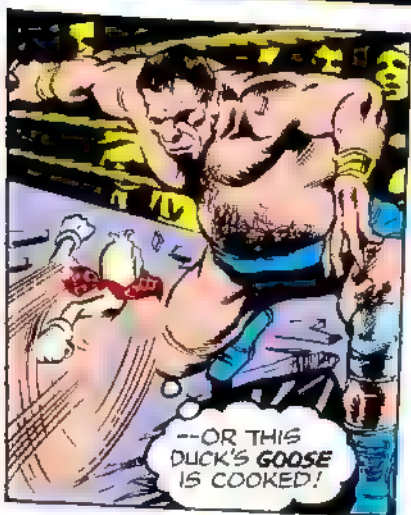
CRIPES,
HE'S
ALREADY
GETTING
UP!

HE CAN STAND
AROUND AN' TAKE
THIS FOREVER--'TIL
I'M ALL
TUCKERED OUT!

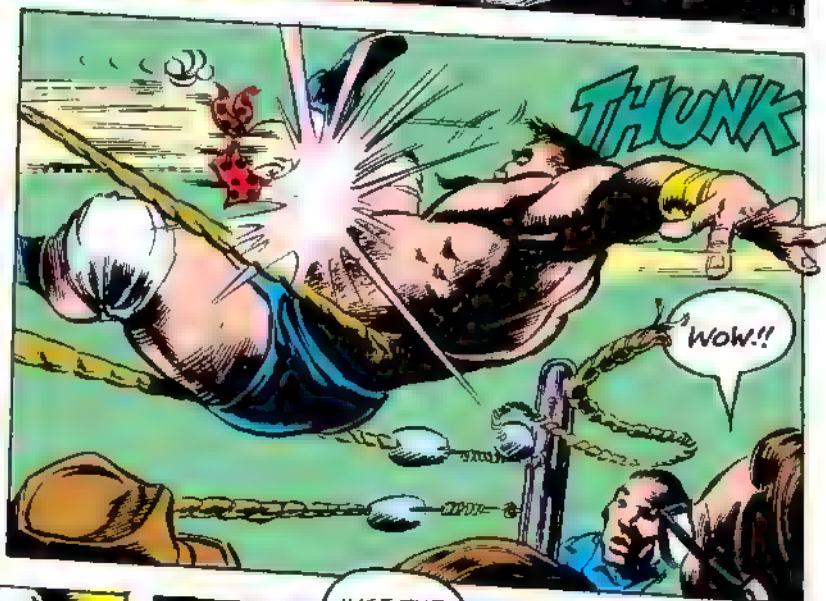


GOTTA PUT EVERYTHING INTO ONE BLOW---

RAM 'IM WHILE HE'S OFF-BALANCE--



--OR THIS DUCK'S GOOSE IS COOKED!



WOW!!



TOO BAD, SAM-- YOUR BOY'S OUT COLD! AND YOU'RE OUT TEN GRAND!

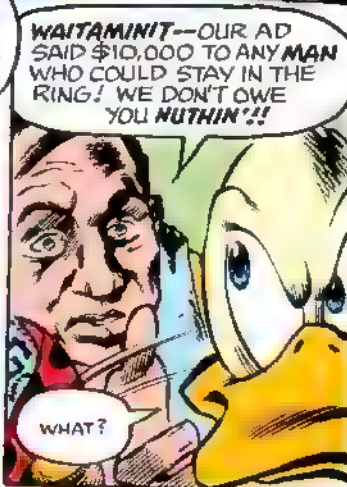
DON'T SUPPOSE I COULD INTEREST YOU IN A CONTRACT, HUH, PAL?

NOPE.



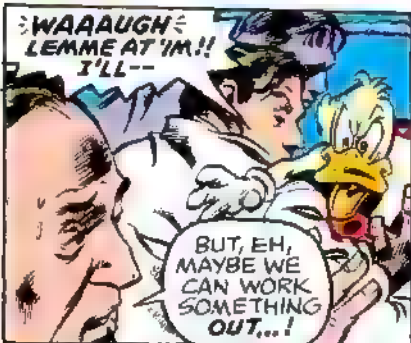
JUST THE MOOLAH, PAL. FORK IT OVER!

Y-YOU'RE -- A DUCK!!



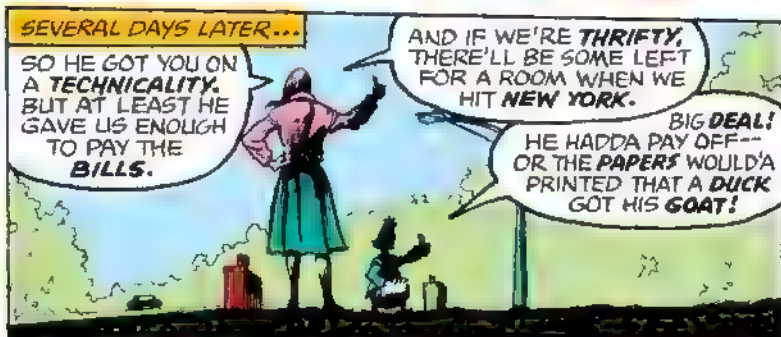
WAITAMINIT--OUR AD SAID \$10,000 TO ANY MAN WHO COULD STAY IN THE RING! WE DON'T OWE YOU NUTHIN'!!

WHAT?



WAAAUGH-- LEMME AT 'IM!! I'LL--

BUT, EH, MAYBE WE CAN WORK SOMETHING OUT...!



SEVERAL DAYS LATER...

SO HE GOT YOU ON A TECHNICALITY. BUT AT LEAST HE GAVE US ENOUGH TO PAY THE BILLS.

AND IF WE'RE THRIFTY, THERE'LL BE SOME LEFT FOR A ROOM WHEN WE HIT NEW YORK.

BIG DEAL! HE HADDA PAY OFF-- OR THE PAPERS WOULD'A PRINTED THAT A DUCK GOT HIS GOAT!

NEXT! THE SECRET HOUSE OF FORBIDDEN COOKIES!

HOWARD
THE DUCK

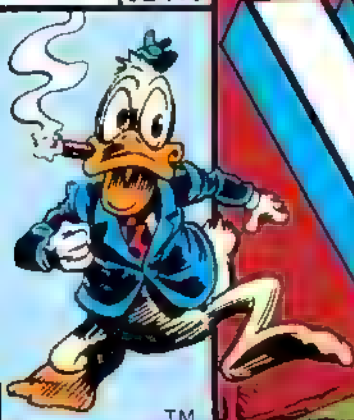
MARVEL COMICS GROUP™



30¢ 6
NOV
02415

TRAPPED IN A WORLD HE NEVER MADE!

HOWARD THE DUCK™



THE SECRET OF THE
CELLAR SINISTER!



From the time of his hatching, he was...different. A potentially brilliant scholar who dreaded the structured environment of school, he educated himself in the streets, taking whatever work was available, formulating his philosophy of self from what he learned of the world about him. And then the Cosmic Axis shifted...and that world *changed*. Suddenly, he was stranded in a universe he could not fathom. Without warning, he became a strange fowl in an even stranger land.

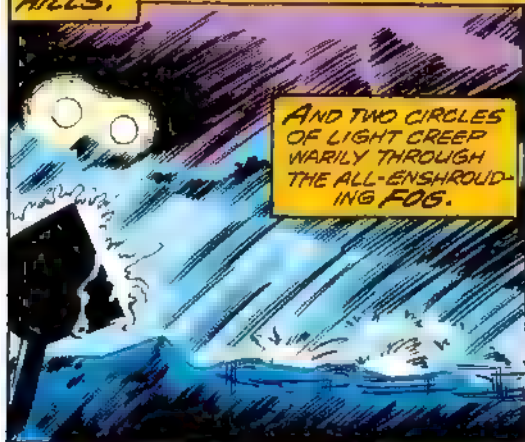
Stan Lee PRESENTS: HOWARD THE DUCK!

STEVE GERBER, WRITER GENE COLAN, ARTIST STEVE LEIALOHA, INKER JOHN COSTANZA, letterer GYNNIS WEIN, colorist ARCHIE GOODWIN, EDITOR

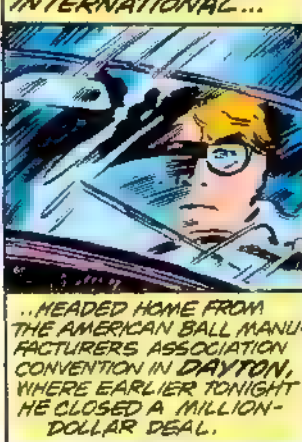
A LONELY HIGHWAY IN PENNSYLVANIA MOUNTAIN COUNTRY, LATE ONE STORMY NIGHT CRAZES OF CRACKLING ELECTRICITY GERRYMANDER THE SKY. THUNDER ECHOES DULLY OFF THE SIDES OF ANCIENT HILLS.

STEERING THOSE TWIN MOONS ON THEIR COURSE IS JOE MOUNTBATTEN, REGIONAL SALES MANAGER OF RUBBERCORP INTERNATIONAL...

SADLY, HIS MIND IS ON HIS TRIUMPH, NOT ON THE BALL. AND THUS, HE IS TOTALLY UNPREPARED...



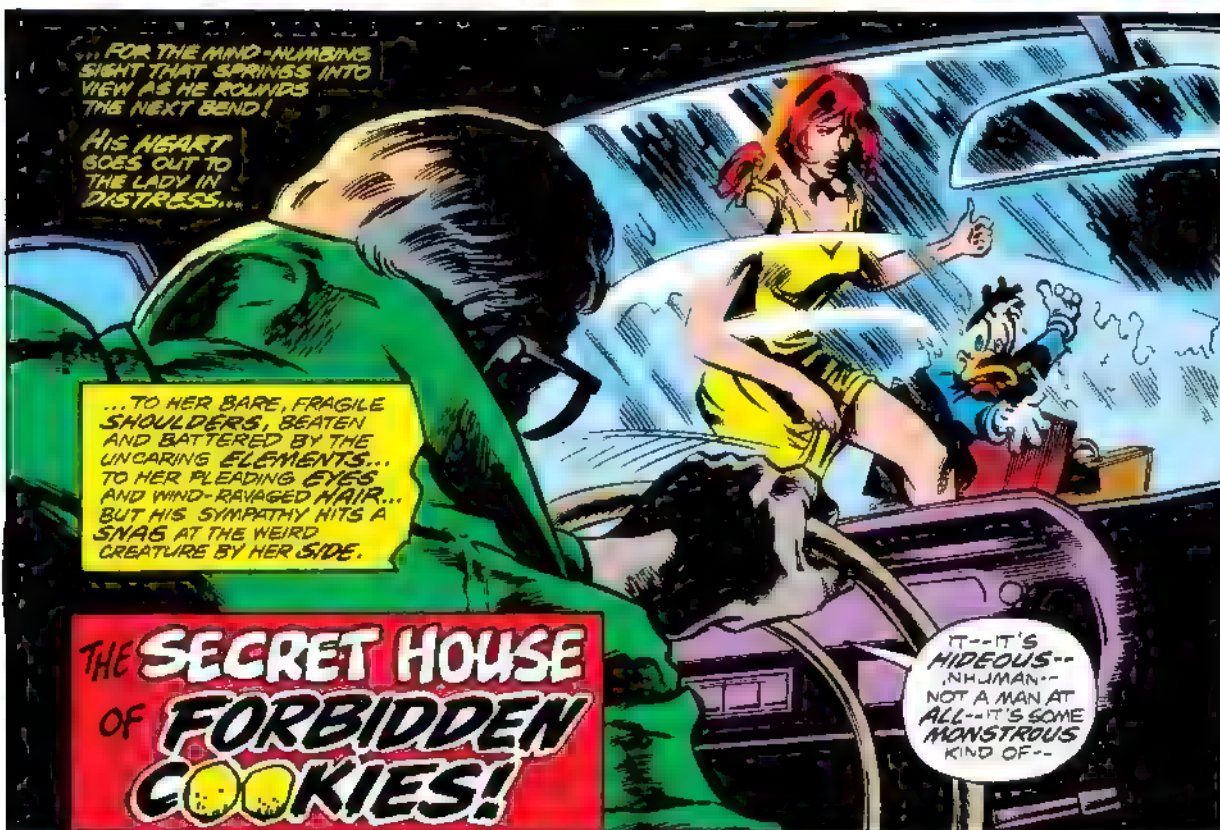
AND TWO CIRCLES OF LIGHT CREEP WARILY THROUGH THE ALL-ENSHROUDING FOG.



...HEADED HOME FROM THE AMERICAN BALL MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION CONVENTION IN DAYTON, WHERE EARLIER TONIGHT HE CLOSED A MILLION-DOLLAR DEAL.



oh my god...



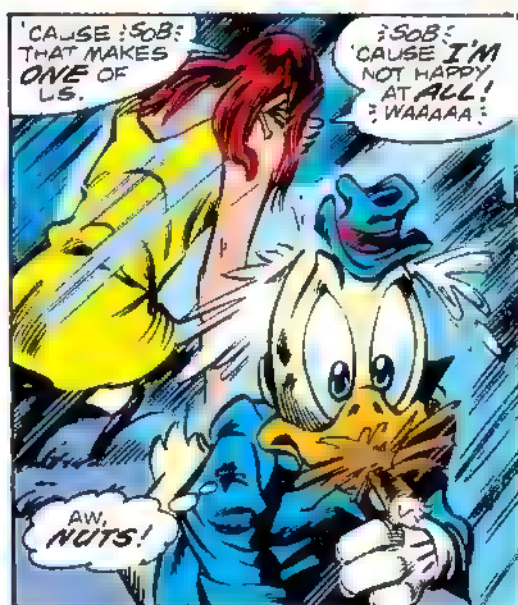
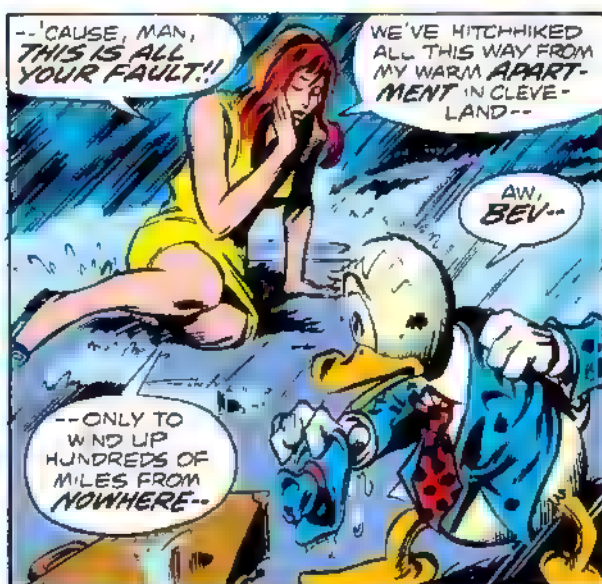
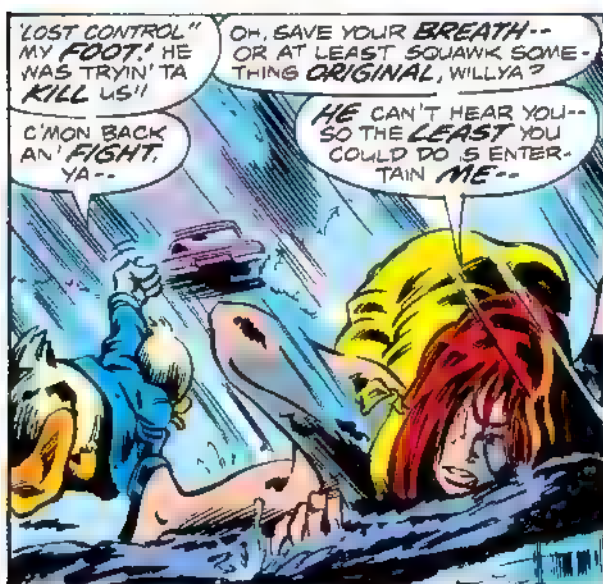
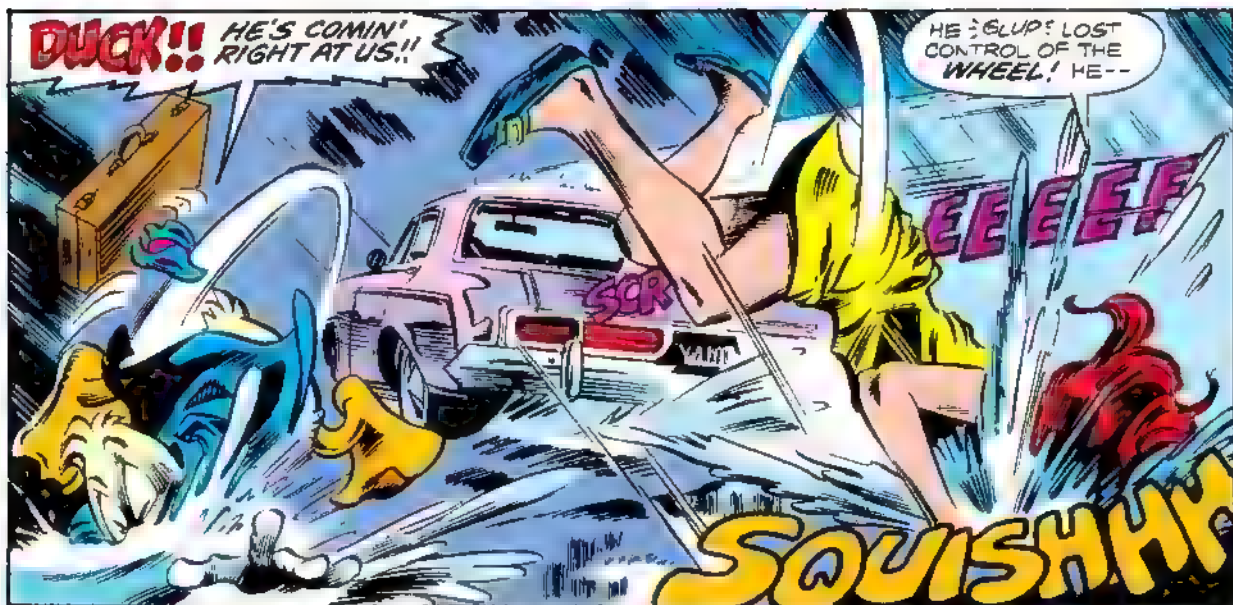
...FOR THE MIND-NUMBING SIGHT THAT SPRINGS INTO VIEW AS HE ROUNDS THE NEXT BEND!

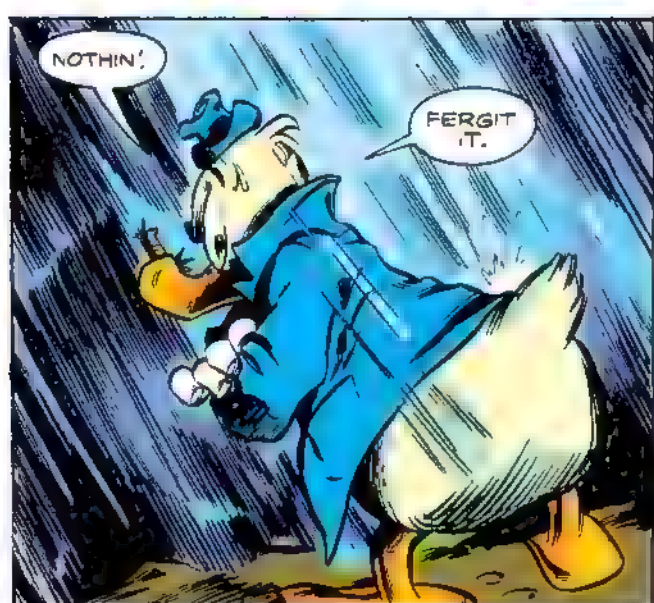
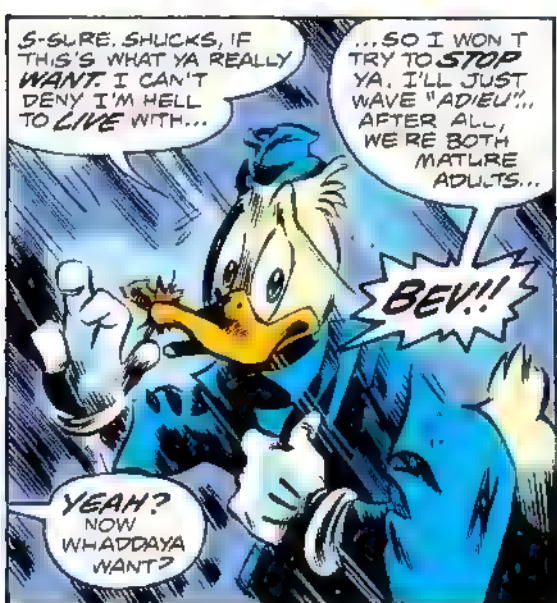
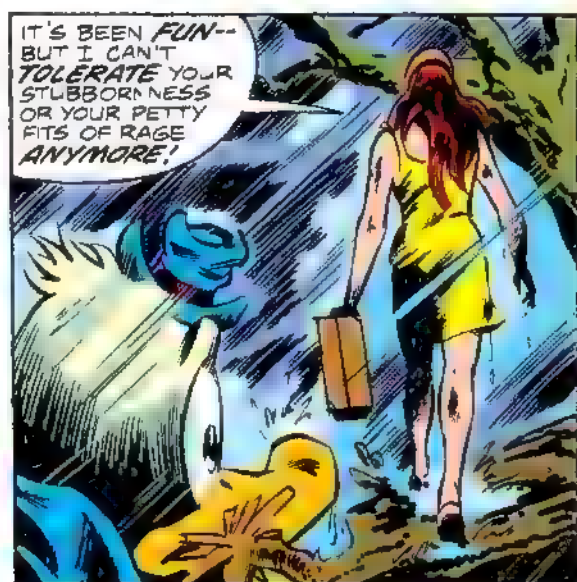
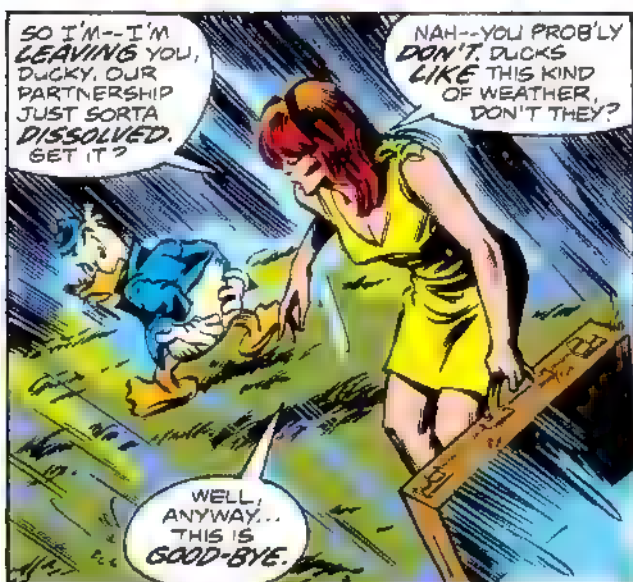
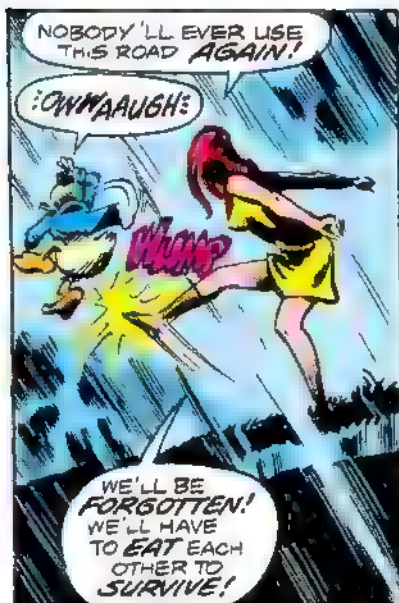
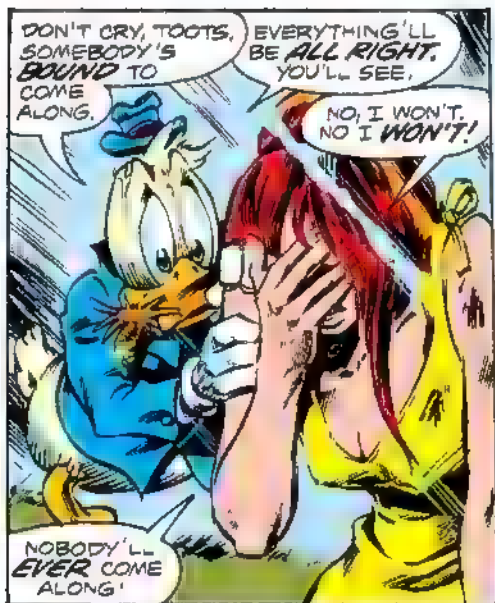
HIS HEART GOES OUT TO THE LADY IN DISTRESS...

...TO HER BARE, FRAGILE SHOULDERS, BEATEN AND BATTERED BY THE UNCARING ELEMENTS... TO HER PLEADING EYES AND WIND-RAVAGED HAIR... BUT HIS SYMPATHY HITS A SNAG AT THE WEIRD CREATURE BY HER SIDE.

THE SECRET HOUSE OF FORBIDDEN COOKIES!

IT--IT'S HIDEOUS--INHUMAN--NOT A MAN AT ALL--IT'S SOME MONSTROUS KIND OF--





SHE DOES--AND WITHOUT MUCH EFFORT, FOR HER FEAR AND THE UPHILL TREK AGAINST THE STORM CONSUME MOST OF HER RAPIDLY WANING ENERGY.

SHE TRUDGES ON FOR HOURS, THOUGH, ON SHEER DETERMINATION, DEEPER INTO THE ENVELOPING BLACKNESS...

NO HANDS 2 MILES

...WITH NO HAVEN IN SIGHT...

...UNTIL THE SKY DETONATES WITH A BRISANCE OF THUNDER AND A BRILLIANT FLASH OF LIGHT...

GRRRAACKKK

...WHICH MOMENTARILY LIMNS THE OUTLINE...

...OF A LOWERING, BROODING VICTORIAN MAN-SION, BUT OF COURSE IT MUST BE DESERTED, SHE ASSUMES, PERHAPS SHE EVEN HOPES IT IS SO.

BUT-- NO.

A LIGHT BURNS IN THE TOP-MOST TOWER WINDOW

AND SO BEVERLY SWITZLER SIMPLY SETS ASIDE HER INSTINCTIVE CAUTION...

...AND HEEDS INSTEAD HER INSTINCT FOR SELF-PRESERVATION.

KNOCK KNOCK

HELLO, IN THERE! ANYBODY HOME?

HOLDING HER BREATH INVOLUNTARILY, SHE WAITS. THE SECONDS DRAG.

UNTIL, AT LAST, THE DOOR CREAKS OPEN TO REVEAL...

WHO'S THERE?

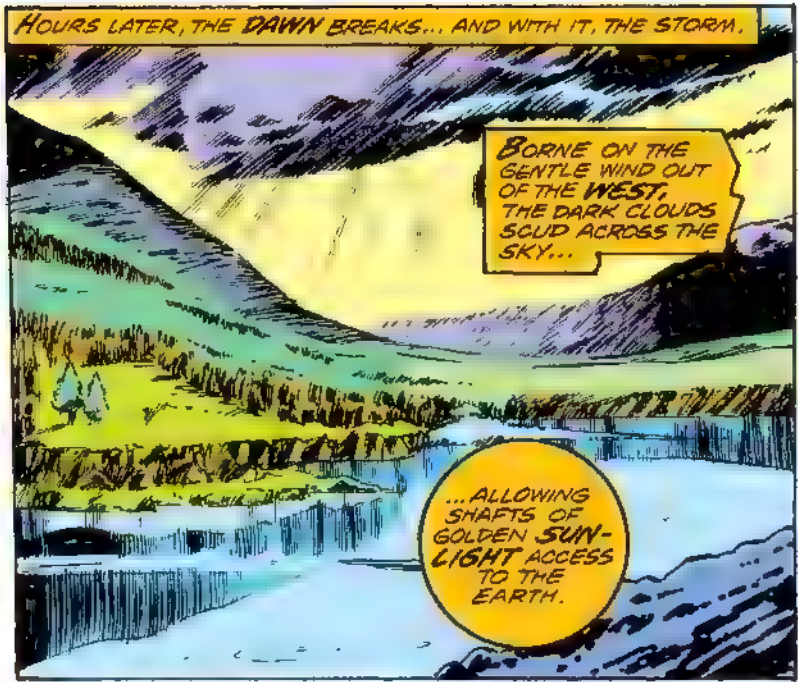
H-HELLO-- I'M BEVERLY SW--

OH, YES. YOU MUST BE THE NEW GOVERNESS.



NEW GOV--?

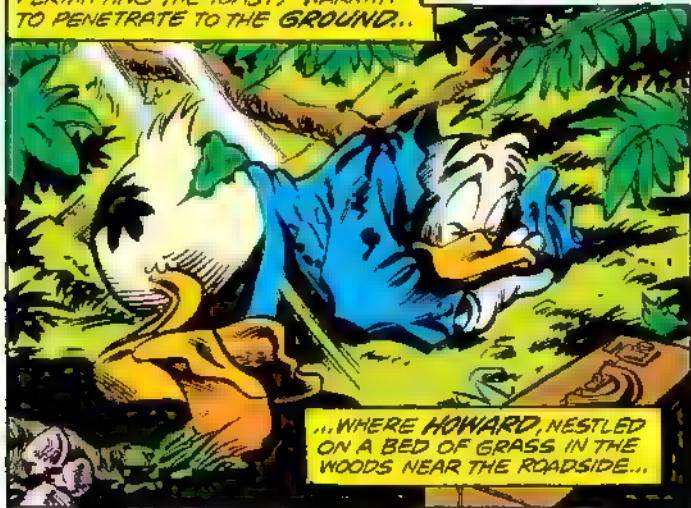
OH, HECK-- WHY NOT? ANYTHING THAT LL GET ME IN THE DOOR!



BORNE ON THE GENTLE WIND OUT OF THE WEST, THE DARK CLOUDS SCUD ACROSS THE SKY...

...ALLOWING SHAFTS OF GOLDEN SUN-LIGHT ACCESS TO THE EARTH.

THAT SAME SOFT BREEZE ALSO PARTS THE LEAVES OF THE TREES, PERMITTING THE TOASTY WARMTH TO PENETRATE TO THE GROUND..



...WHERE HOWARD, NESTLED ON A BED OF GRASS IN THE WOODS NEAR THE ROADSIDE...



...STIRS AWAKE AT THE SOUND OF APPROACHING FOOTSTEPS AND EXCITED VOICES.

GOLLY! LOOK AT THAT!

WHAT IS IT?

IT'S A BIRD-- LOOK AT THE FEATHERS!

GASH! IS IT DEAD?

I DUNNO!



WOW-- MUST BE AN EAGLE, FROM THE SIZE OF IT!

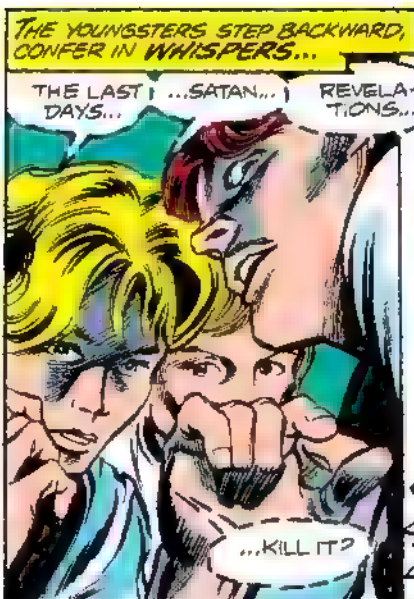
AN EAGLE? WITH WEBBED FEET?

UH-OH!



JEEPERS! IT'S MOVING!

IT IS-- IT'S ALIVE! AND IT'S GOT CLOTHES ON-- AND IT'S A DUCK!



THE YOUNGSTERS STEP BACKWARD, CONFER IN WHISPERS...

THE LAST I ...SATAN... REVELATIONS...

...KILL IT?



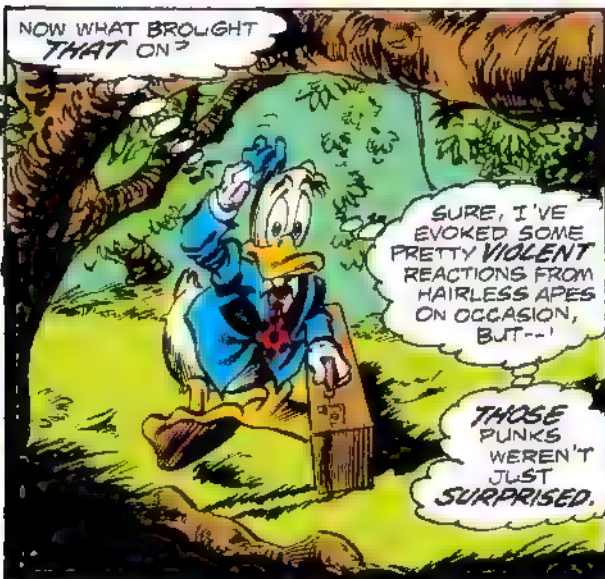
UH, LISTEN, GANG... I FARE MUCH BETTER AS A PARTICIPANT THAN AS A TOPIC IN CONVERSATION.

AAAGH: IT TALKS!!



RUN AND DON'T LOOK BACK! WE'VE GOTTA TELL THE HOLY FATHER WHAT WE'VE SEEN-- AND HEARD!

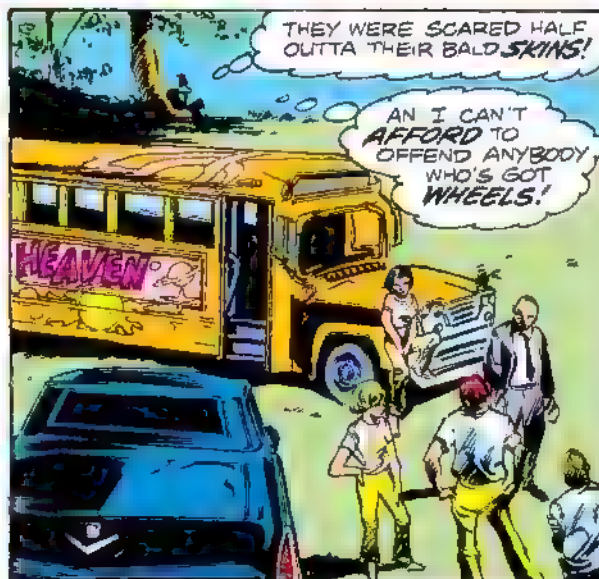
HUH?



NOW WHAT BROUGHT THAT ON?

SURE, I'VE EVOKED SOME PRETTY VIOLENT REACTIONS FROM HAIRLESS APES ON OCCASION, BUT--

THOSE PUNKS WEREN'T JUST SURPRISED.



THEY WERE SCARED HALF OUTTA THEIR BALD SKINS!

AN I CAN'T AFFORD TO OFFEND ANYBODY WHO'S GOT WHEELS!



THERE, MASTER' LURKING N THE BRUSH! THERE IT IS! IT'S COMING!

SO I SEE. THANK YOU, WALLACE.

NOW REMAIN CALM. TRUST IN ME. WE HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR FROM SATAN.



GREETINGS, BEAST. I AM REV. JOON MOON YUC, SERVANT OF THE LORD.

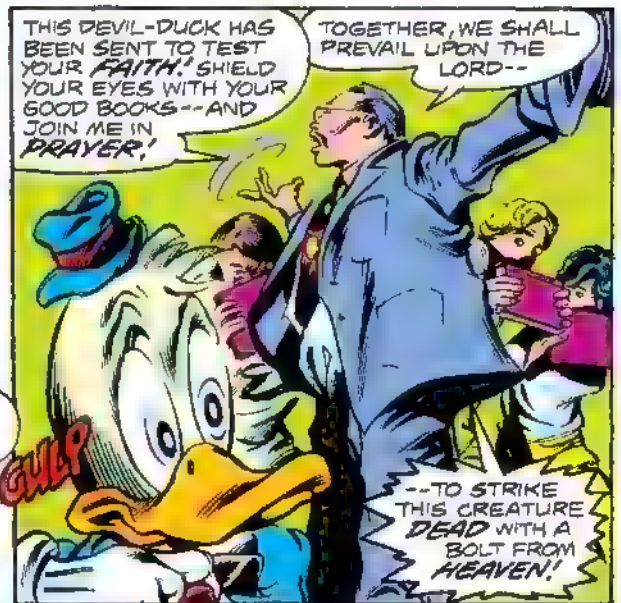
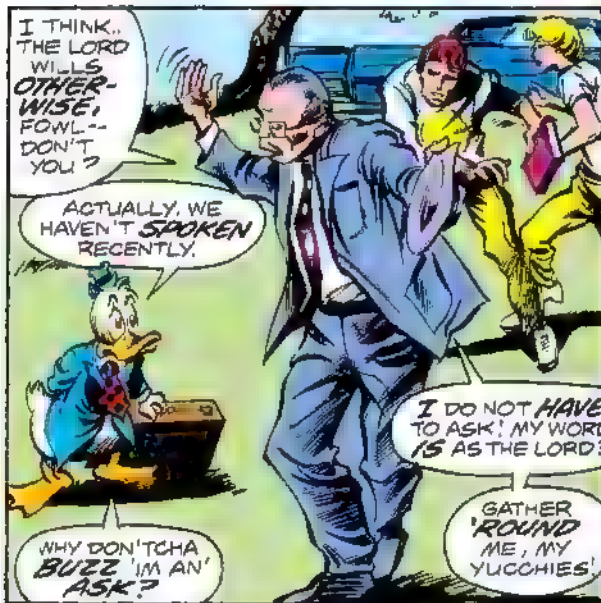
AND THESE ARE MY DISCIPLES-- MY YUCCHIES.

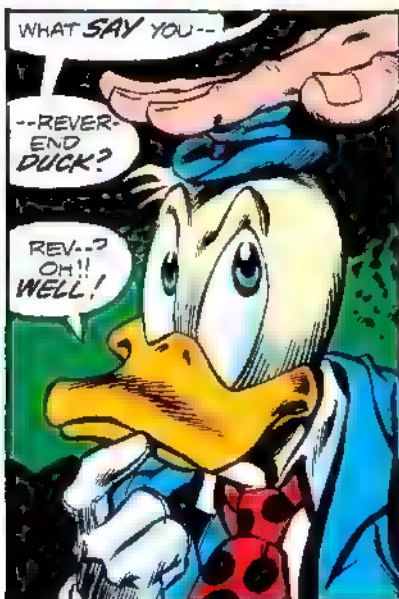
YEAH, WELL-- I'M HOWARD THE DUCK..

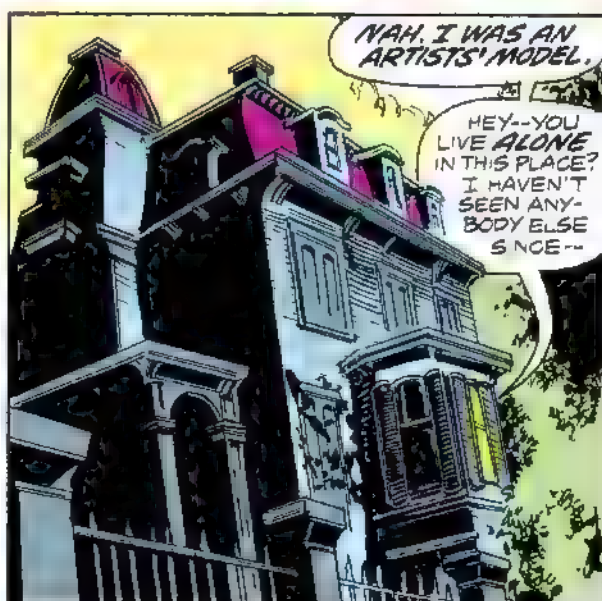
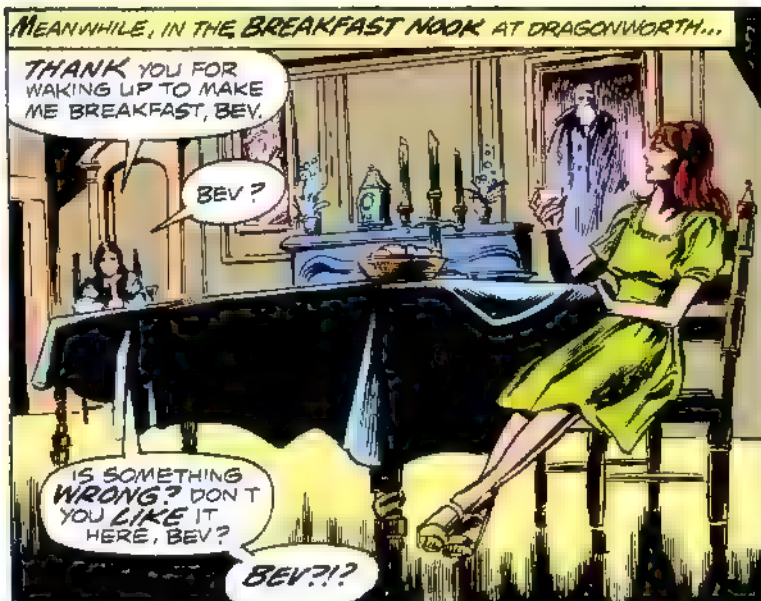


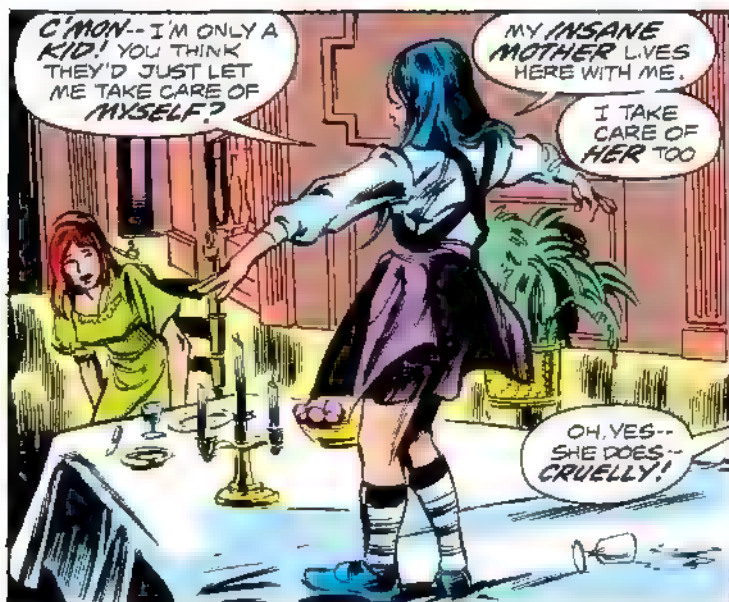
--AN' THOSE'RE THE WOODS I SLEPT N ALL LAST NIGHT.

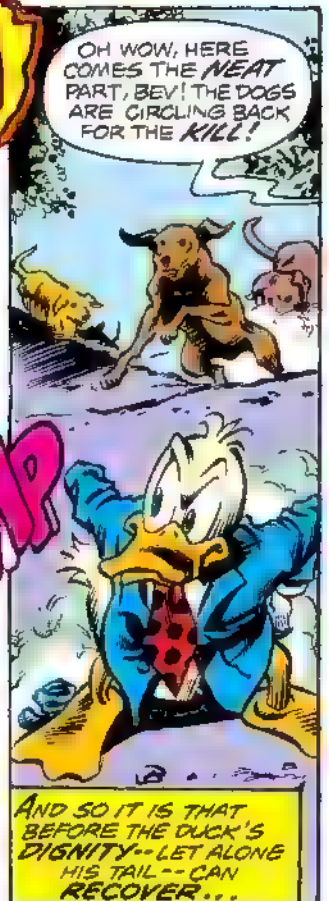
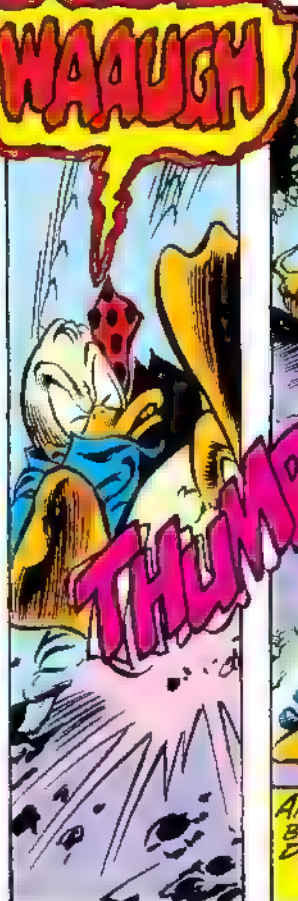
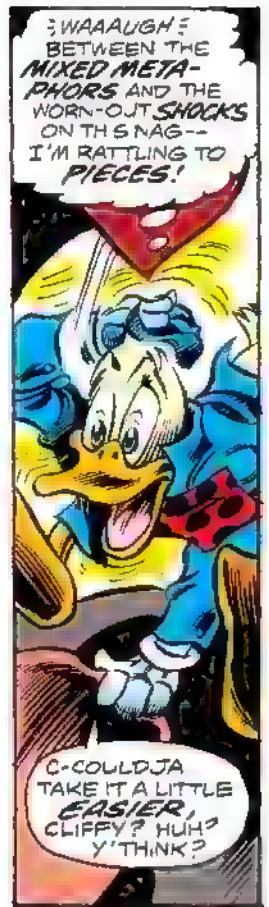
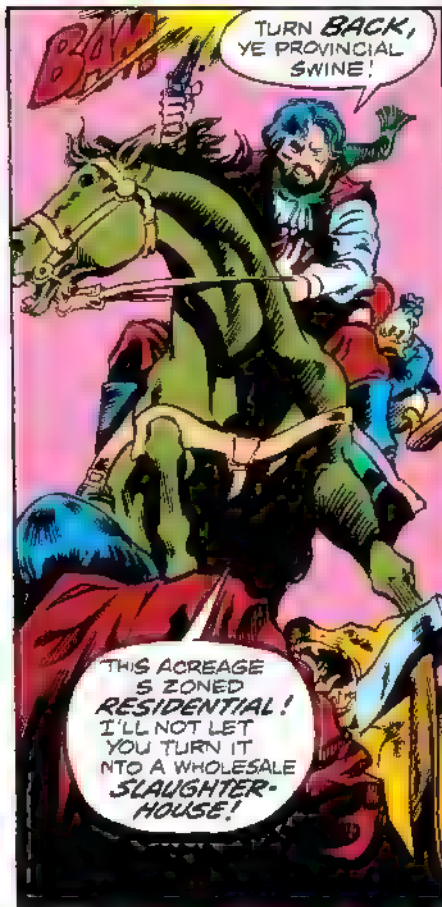
FIGGER YOU COULD SPARE A LIFT?

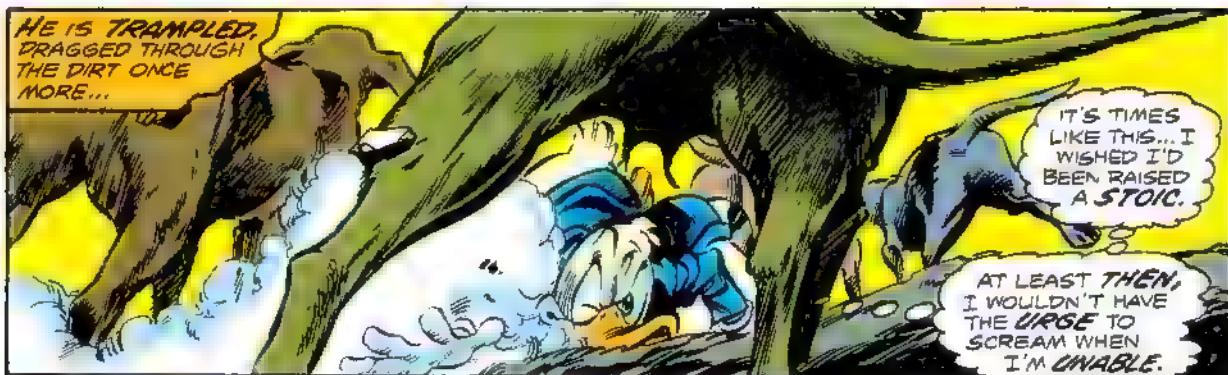








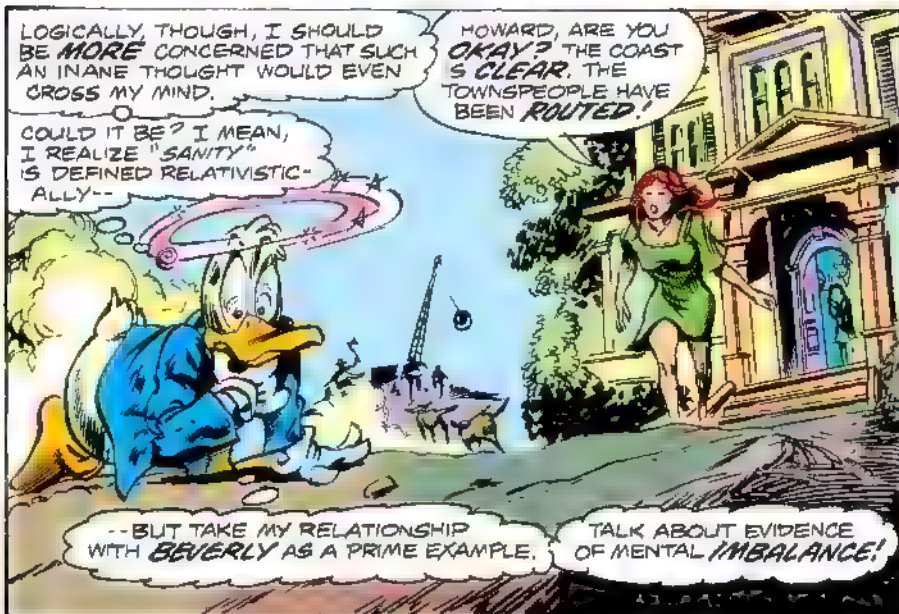




HE IS TRAMPLED, DRAGGED THROUGH THE DIRT ONCE MORE...

IT'S TIMES LIKE THIS... I WISHED I'D BEEN RAISED A STOIC.

AT LEAST THEN, I WOULDN'T HAVE THE URGE TO SCREAM WHEN I'M UNABLE.



LOGICALLY, THOUGH, I SHOULD BE **MORE** CONCERNED THAT SUCH AN INANE THOUGHT WOULD EVEN CROSS MY MIND.

COULD IT BE? I MEAN, I REALIZE "SANITY" IS DEFINED RELATIVISTICALLY--

HOWARD, ARE YOU **OKAY?** THE COAST'S CLEAR. THE TOWNSPEOPLE HAVE BEEN **ROUTED!**

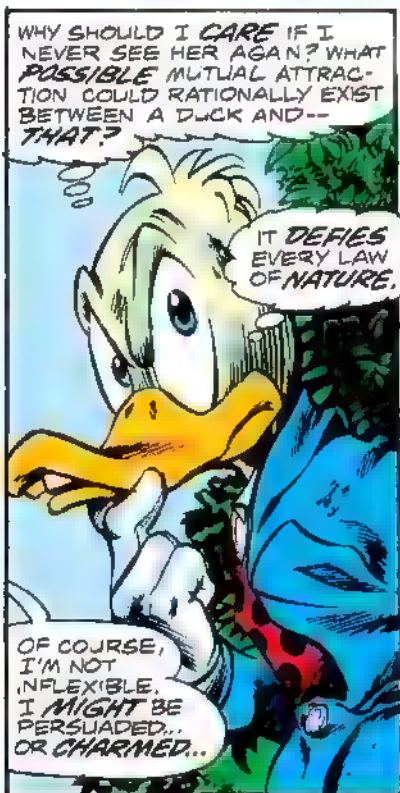
--BUT TAKE MY RELATIONSHIP WITH **BEVERLY** AS A PRIME EXAMPLE.

TALK ABOUT EVIDENCE OF MENTAL **IMBALANCE!**



WAITAMINIT... WE'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE **SPEAKING**, ARE WE?

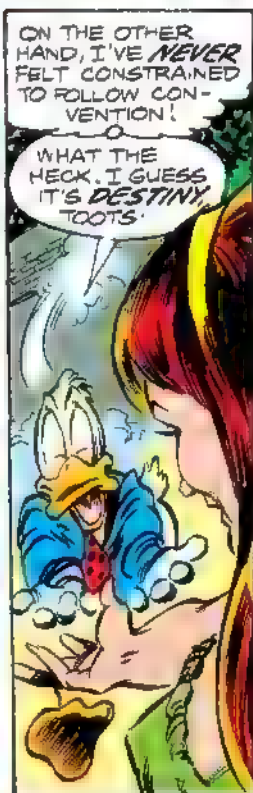
WHY?



WHY SHOULD I **CARE** IF I NEVER SEE HER AGAIN? WHAT **POSSIBLE** MUTUAL ATTRACTION COULD RATIONALLY EXIST BETWEEN A DUCK AND-- **THAT?**

IT **DEFIES** EVERY LAW OF NATURE.

OF COURSE, I'M NOT INFLEXIBLE. I **MIGHT** BE PERSUADED... OR **CHARMED...**



ON THE OTHER HAND, I'VE **NEVER** FELT CONSTRAINED TO FOLLOW CONVENTION!

WHAT THE HECK, I GUESS IT'S **DESTINY** TOOTS.



HOW COULD THIS BE **WRONG--OR** INSANE--WHEN IT FEELS SO **GOOD?**

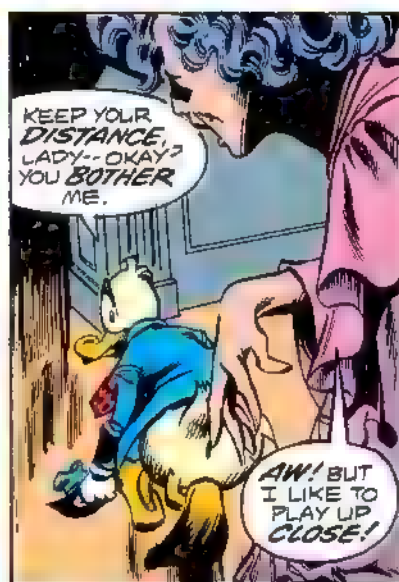
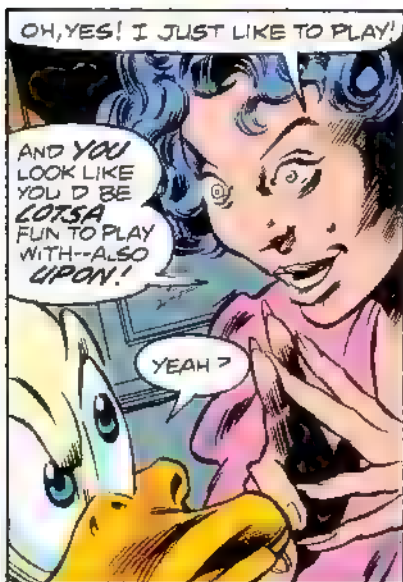
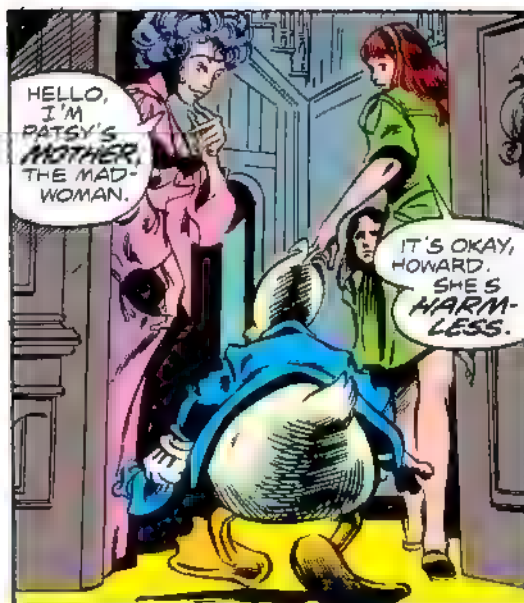
Y'KNOW, DUCKY... I'M ASHAMED TO ADMIT TH'S.

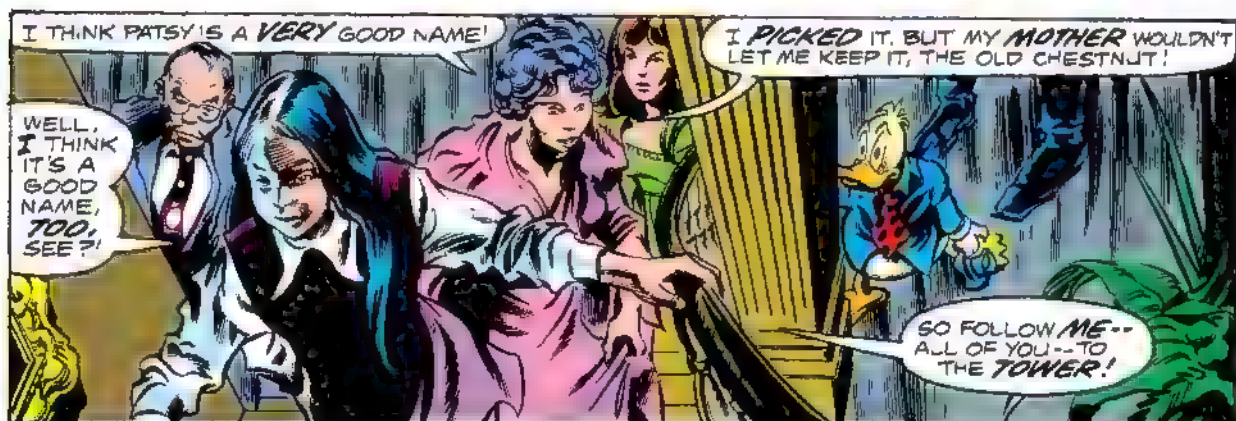
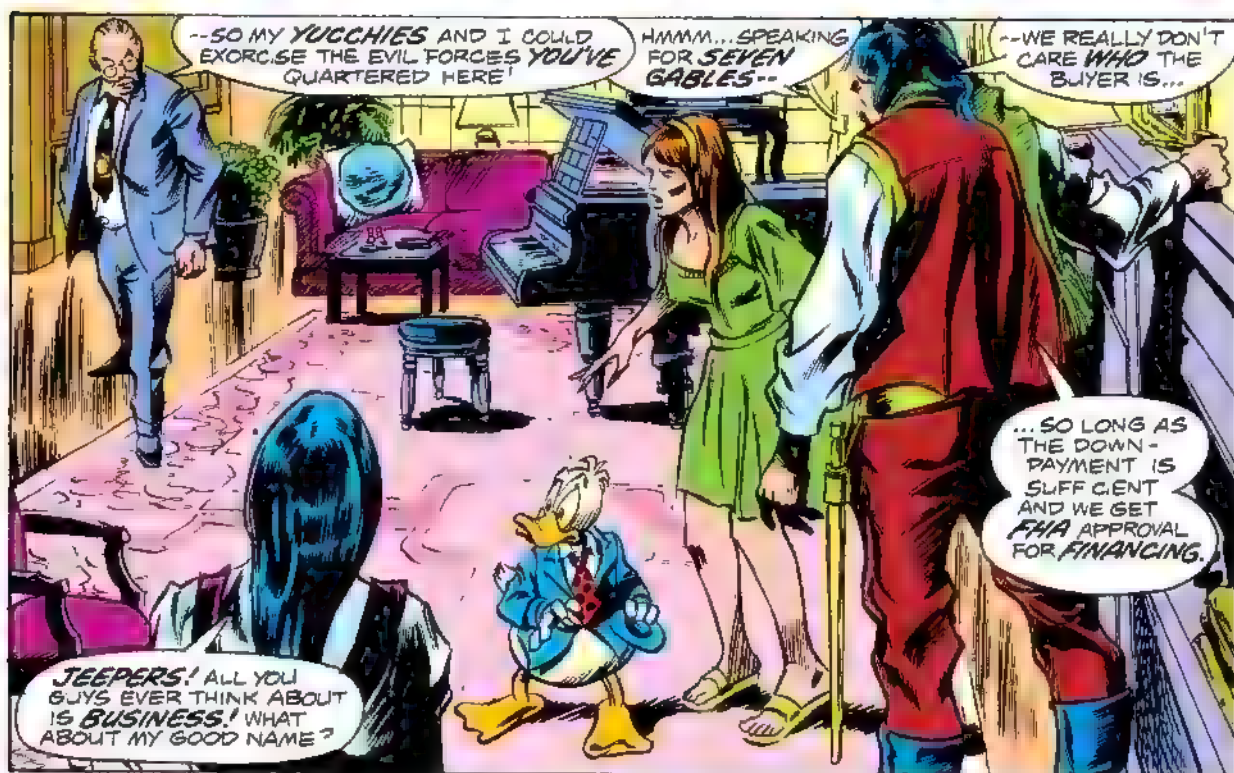


.. BUT I **MISSED** YOU. I ALWAYS CONSIDERED MYSELF SO SELF-SUFFICIENT. BUT...

YEAH, I KNOW HOW IT GOES LOVE'S **STRANGE**, AN ALL THAT!

BLOOP



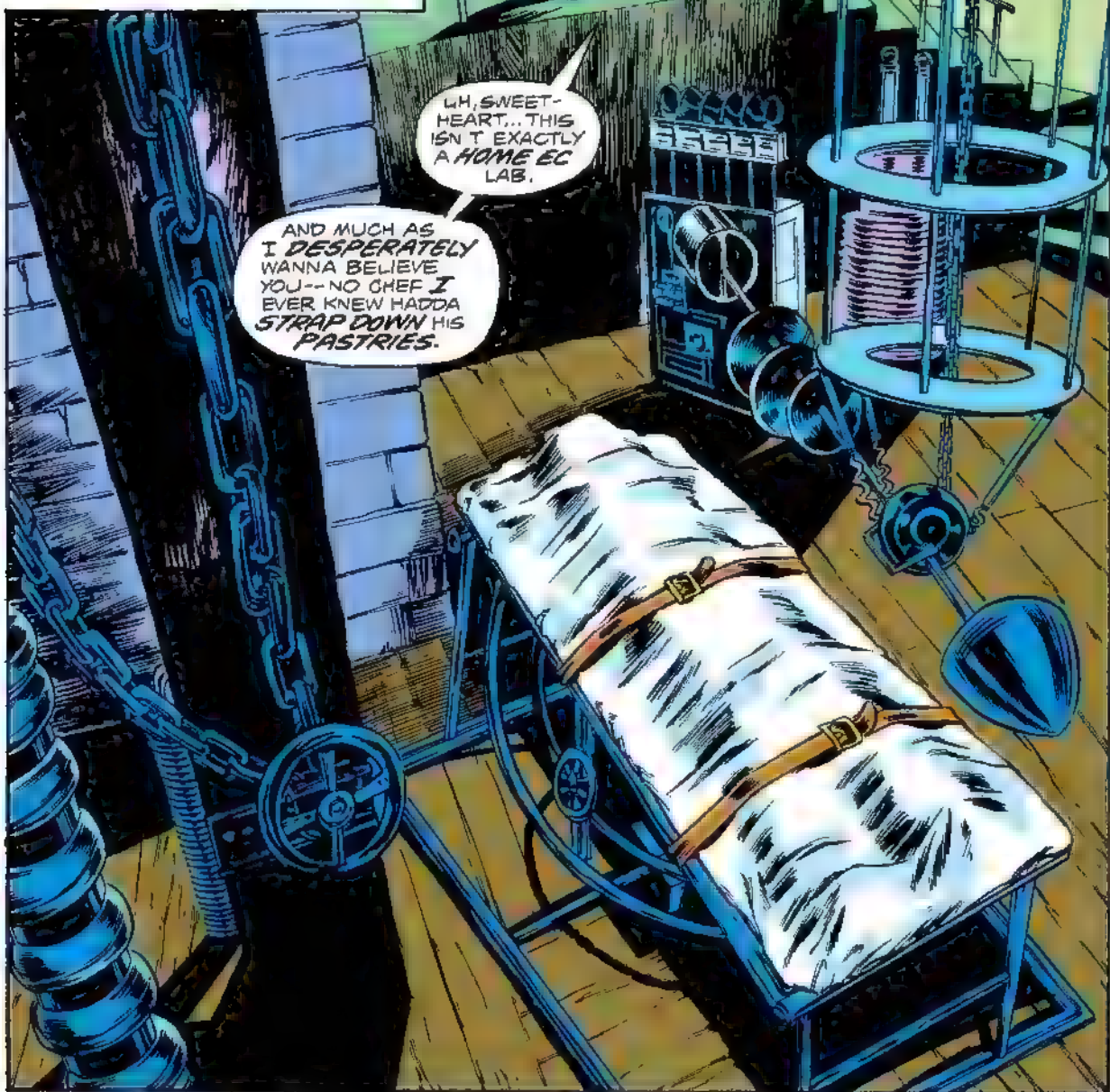




I'M *SICK*
OF SEEING
"PATSY"
BESMIRCHED!

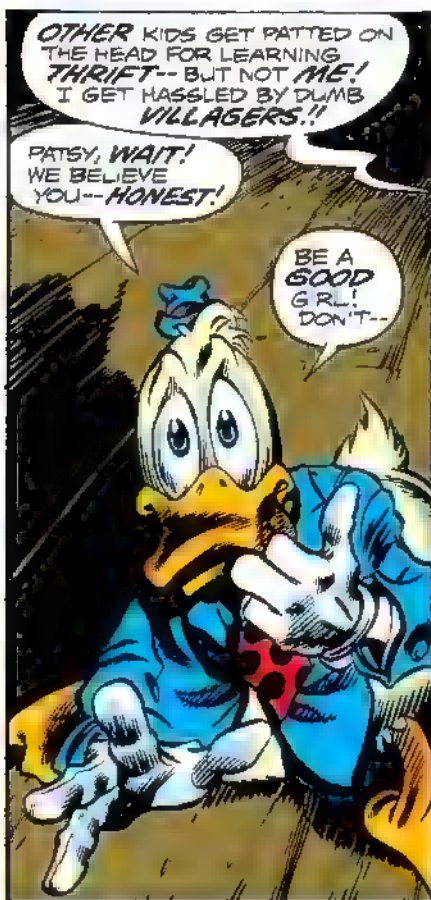


SO I'M GONNA
PROVE TO YOU--
ONCE AND FOR
ALL--THAT I'M REALLY
JUST BAKING
COOKIES!

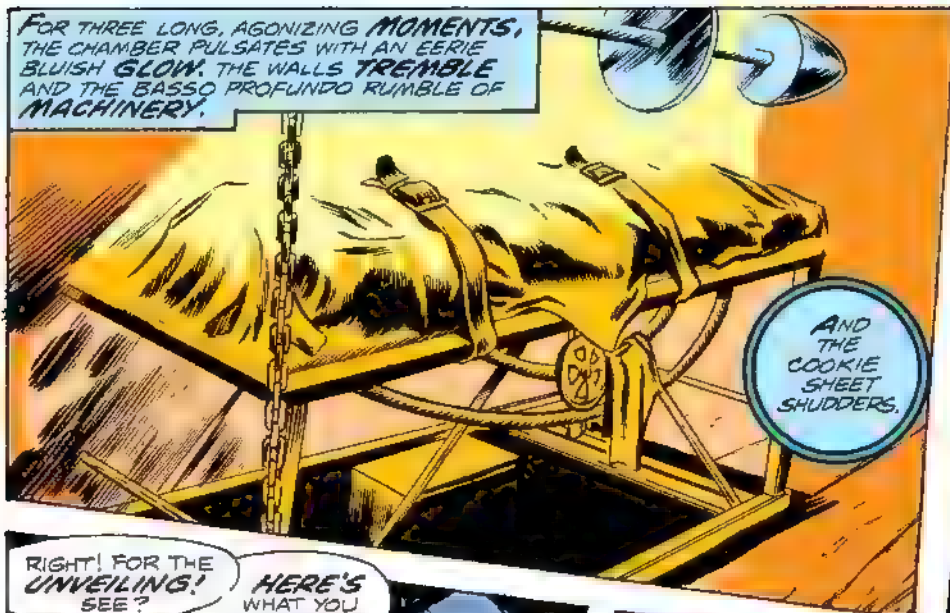


UH, SWEET-
HEART... THIS
ISN'T EXACTLY
A HOME EC
LAB.

AND MUCH AS
I *DESPERATELY*
WANNA BELIEVE
YOU-- NO CHEF I
EVER KNEW HADDA
STRAP DOWN HIS
PASTRIES.

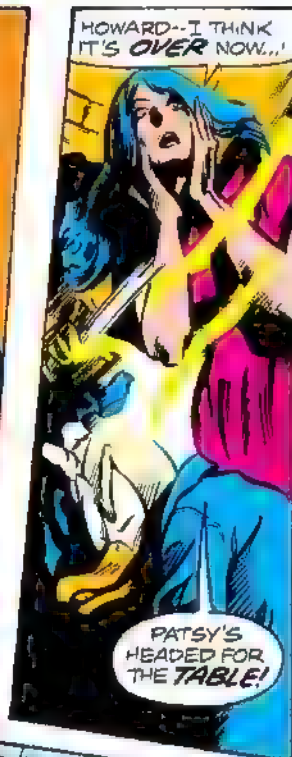


FOR THREE LONG, AGONIZING MOMENTS, THE CHAMBER PULSATES WITH AN EERIE BLUISH GLOW. THE WALLS TREMBLE AND THE BASSO PROFUNDO RUMBLE OF MACHINERY.



AND THE COOKIE SHEET SHUDDERS.

HOWARD--I THINK IT'S OVER NOW...



PATSY'S HEADED FOR THE TABLE!

RIGHT! FOR THE UNVEILING! SEE?

HERE'S WHAT YOU WERE AFRAID OF!

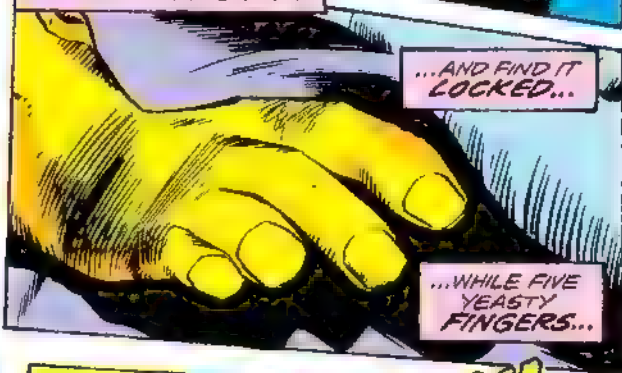


SON OF A CONTRACTOR...

WH-WHAT IS IT?

A--A GIANT GINGERBREAD MAN!

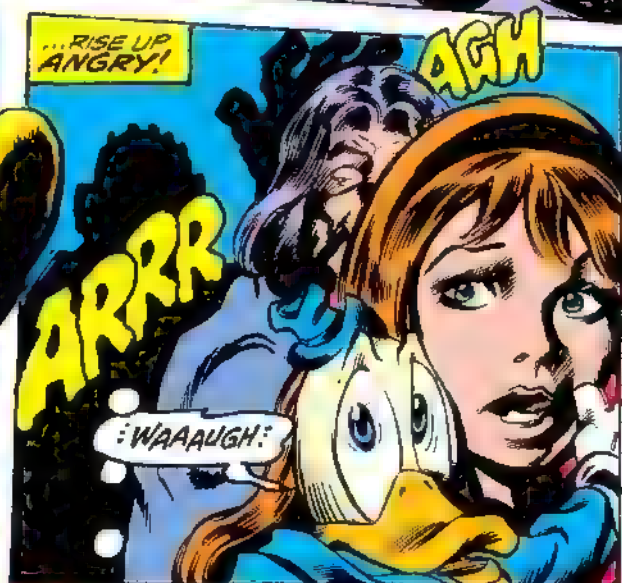
HEAVING A FIVE-THROATED SIGH OF RELIEF, THE FOUR ADULTS AND ONE DUCK STAGGER TO THE DOOR...



...AND FIND IT LOCKED...

...WHILE FIVE YEASTY FINGERS...

...RISE UP ANGRY!



WAAAUGH!

NEXT

"THE WAY THE COOKIE CRUMBLES!" PLUS 2ND BIG LAFF RIOT!
"THE MANCHURIAN DUCK-- PART ONE!"

HOWARD
THE DUCK

MARVEL COMICS GROUP™

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

30¢

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TRAPPED IN A WORLD HE NEVER MADE!

HOWARD THE DUCK

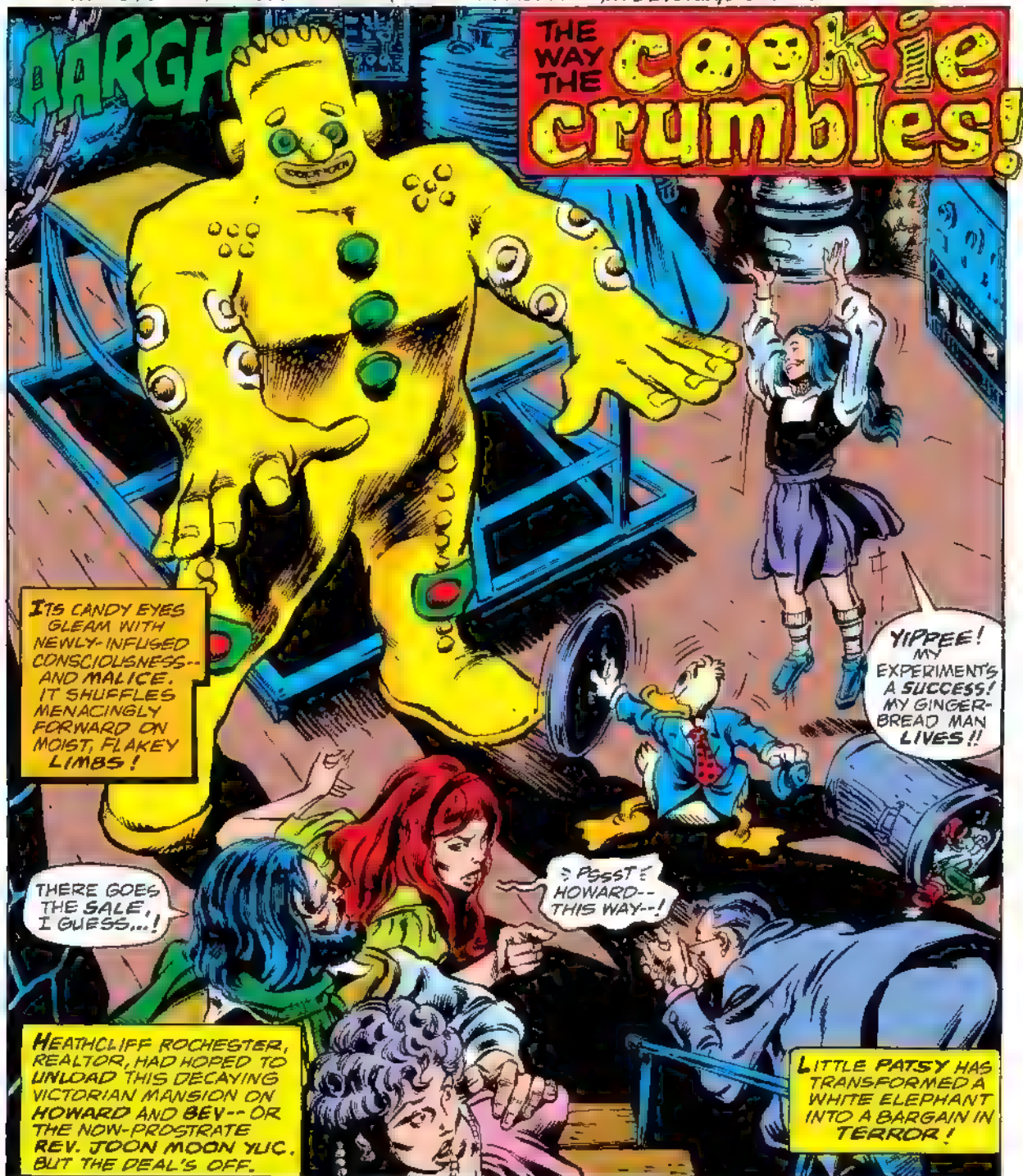
FROM THE
OVEN...
IT RISES!

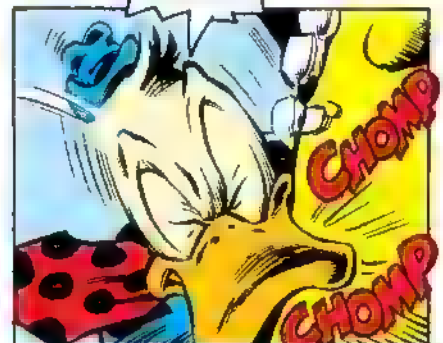
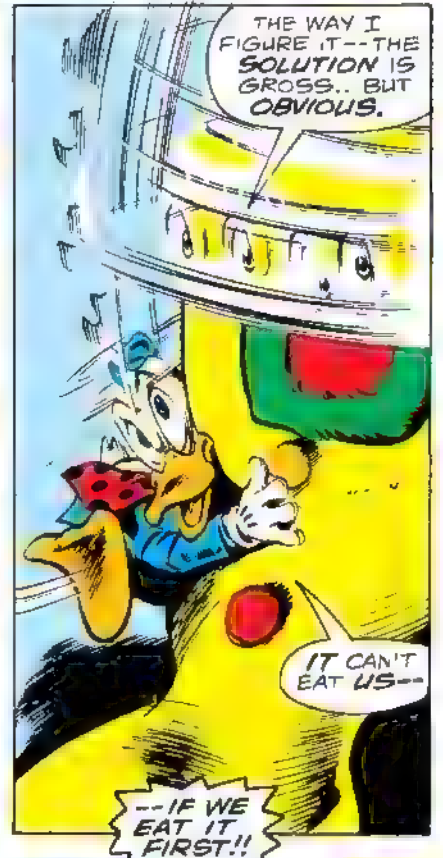
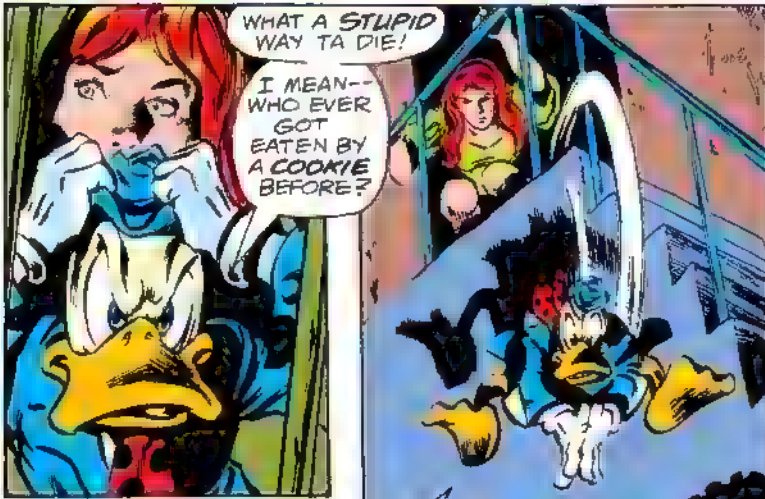
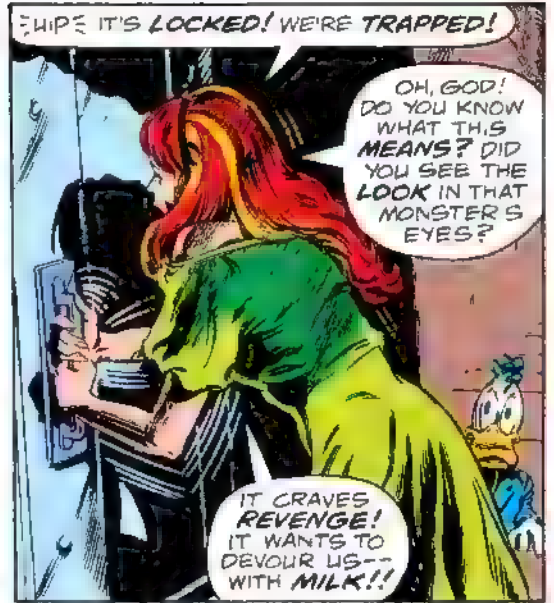
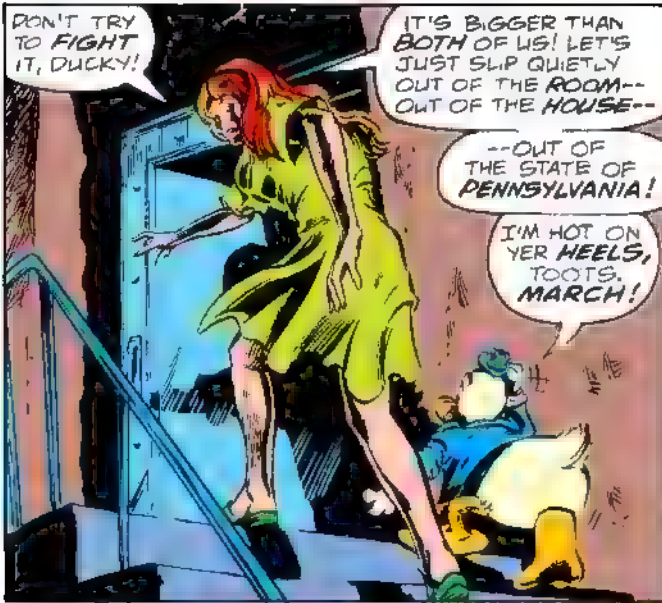
ONLY ONE
FIGHTING FOWL
STANDS BETWEEN
AN UNSUSPECTING
WORLD AND...
**THE INCREDIBLE
COOKIE
CREATURE!**

From the time of his hatching, he was different. A potentially brilliant scholar who dreaded the structured environment of school, he educated himself in the streets, taking whatever work was available, formulating his philosophy of self from what he learned of the world about him. And then the Cosmic Axis shifted, and that world *changed*. Suddenly, he was stranded in a universe he could not fathom. Without warning, he became a strange fowl in an even stranger land.

Stan Lee PRESENTS: HOWARD THE DUCK!™

STEVE GERBER / GENE COLAN / STEVE LEIALOHA / JIM NOVAK, LETTERER / ARCHIE GOODWIN
 WRITER / ILLUSTRATOR / EMBELLISHER / M. SEVERIN, COLORIST / EDITOR





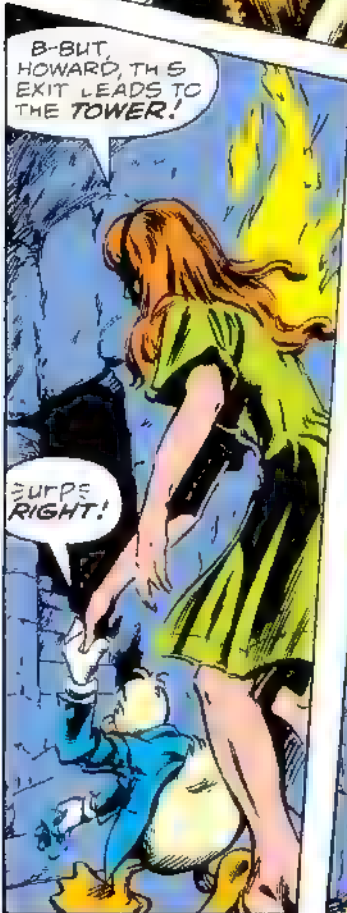


ITS RIGHT LEG SEVERED BY THE FOWL'S RUTHLESSLY CHOMPING BEAK THE MONSTER COOKIE TOTTERS...TIPS... TOPPLES INTO LITTLE PATSY'S JURY-RIGGED ELECTRICAL SYSTEM.

GLUTTONOUS MOMENTS LATER, THE SURGERY IS COMPLETED.

VROOOON

SURP'S OKAY, BEV! FOLLOW ME!

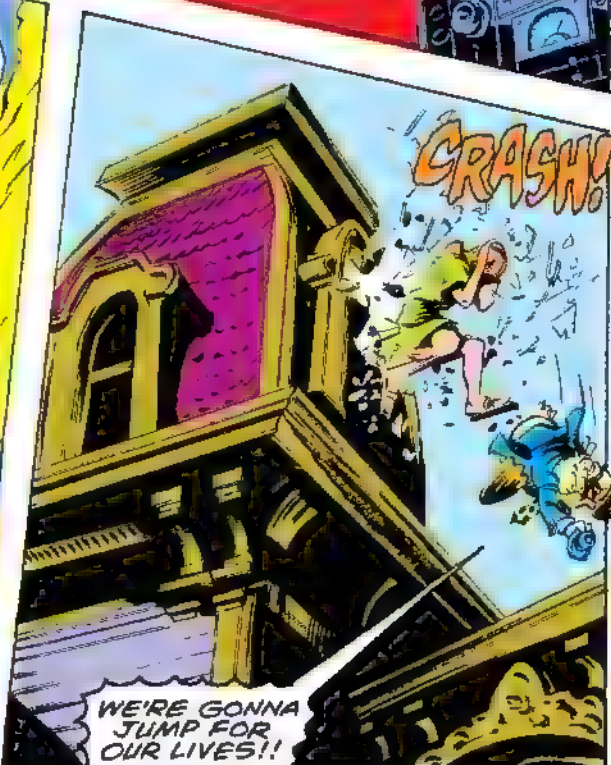


B-BUT HOWARD, THE EXIT LEADS TO THE TOWER!

SURP'S RIGHT!

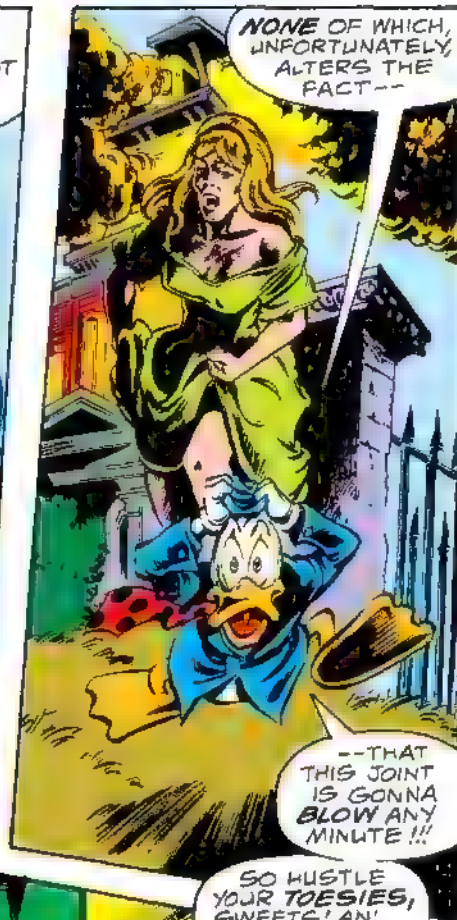
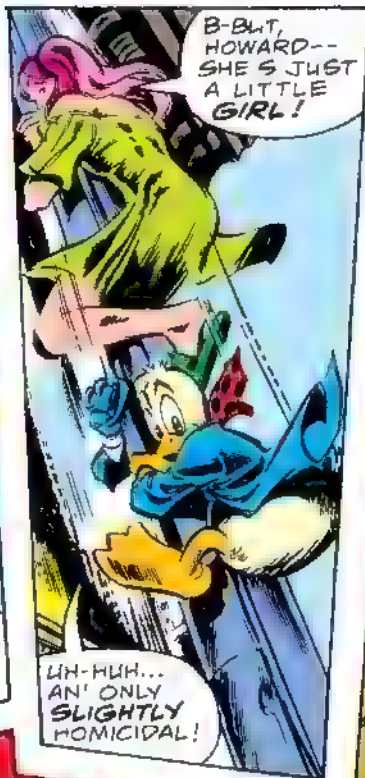
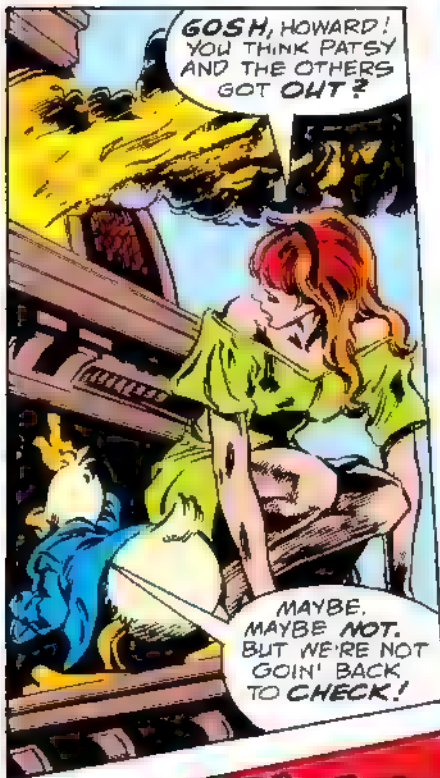


WE'RE GONNA MAKE OUR WAY CALMLY UNHURRLEDY. AN' WHEN WE GET THERE--



CRASH!

WE'RE GONNA JUMP FOR OUR LIVES!!



FOR A TIME THE GHASTLY RUMBLE OF THE EXPLOSION REVERBERATES OFF THE POCONO MOUNTAINSIDES-- A SONOROUS DEATH-BURP ECHOING INTO ETERNITY--

THEN, THE DIN SUBSIDES, THE SMOKE CLEARS TO REVEAL:

JUST DEBRIS. SIGH. GUESS THE OTHERS GOT WASTED, HUH?

YUP JET-PROPELLED ON THEIR WAY TO THAT BIG ASHTRAY IN THE SKY.

IT'S KIND OF A SHAME ABOUT POOR PATSY.

I DON'T THINK SHE MEANT TO HURT ANYBODY WITH HER EXPERIMENTS.

YEAH--WELL-- THAT'S EASY FOR YOU TO SAY.

YOU DIDN'T TASTE THE COOKIE!

PHWAAALGH

PERSONALLY, I'M CONVINCED SHE WAS A 37-YEAR-OLD MIDGET-- AN ESCAPEE FROM SOME PENITENTIARY'S DEATH ROW--

--A HATE-DRIVEN, BLOODTHIRSTY, ANTI-SOCIAL DEVIANT-- A WARPED, CALLOUS, CALCULATING--

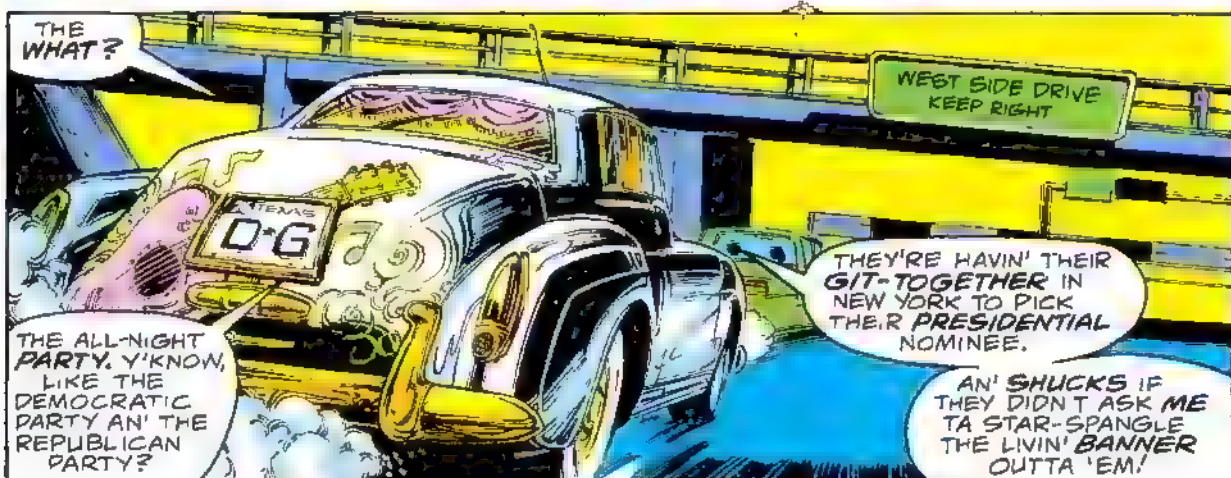
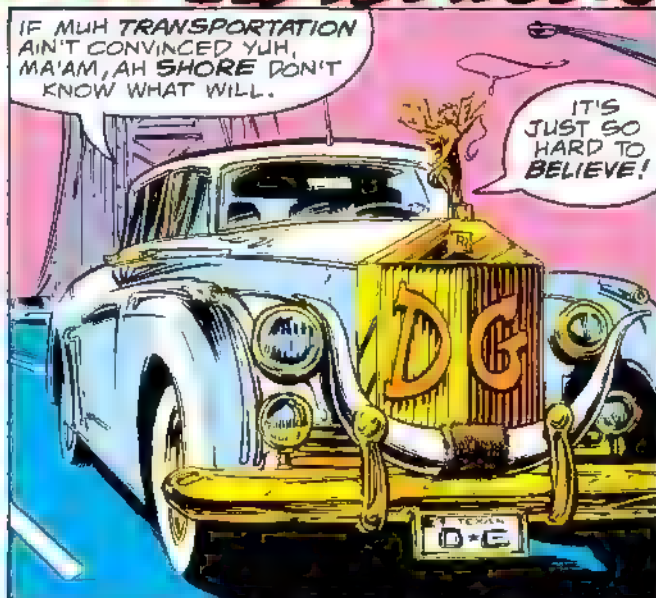
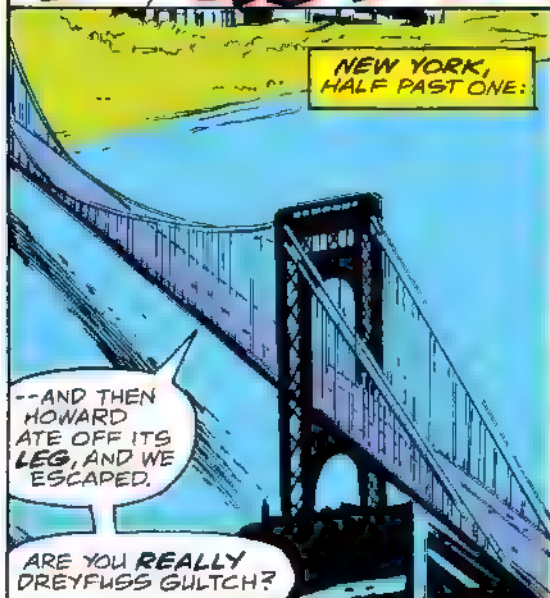
NAH, SHE WAS JUST A PRODUCT OF HER ENVIRONMENT. C'MON, LET'S HIKE TO THE NEXT GAS STATION.

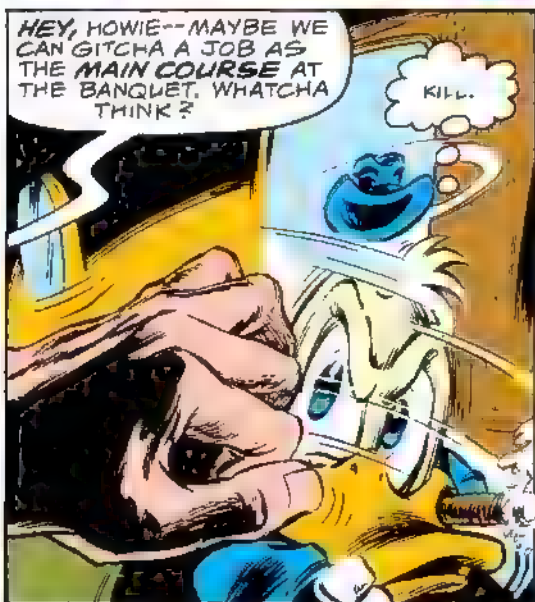
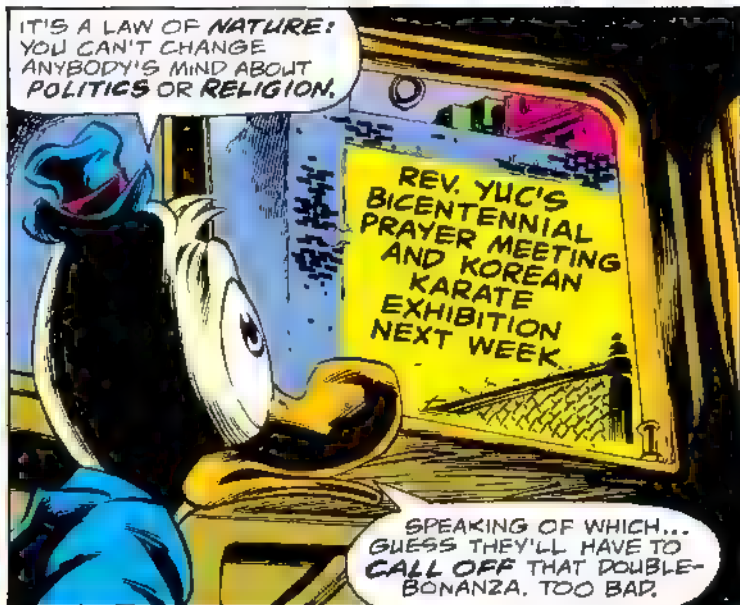
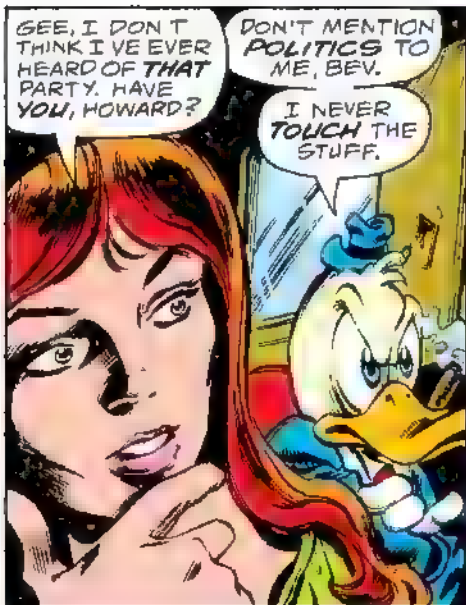
WE'LL NEVER THUMB A RIDE LOOKING THIS GRIMY.

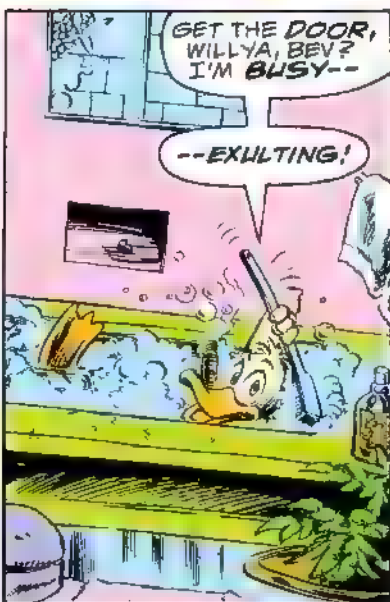
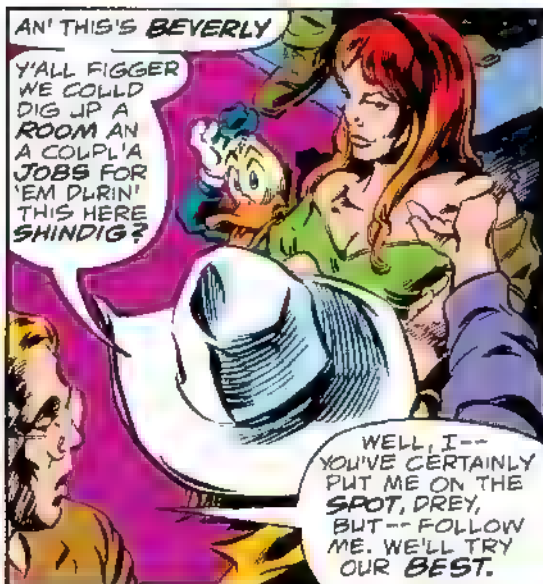
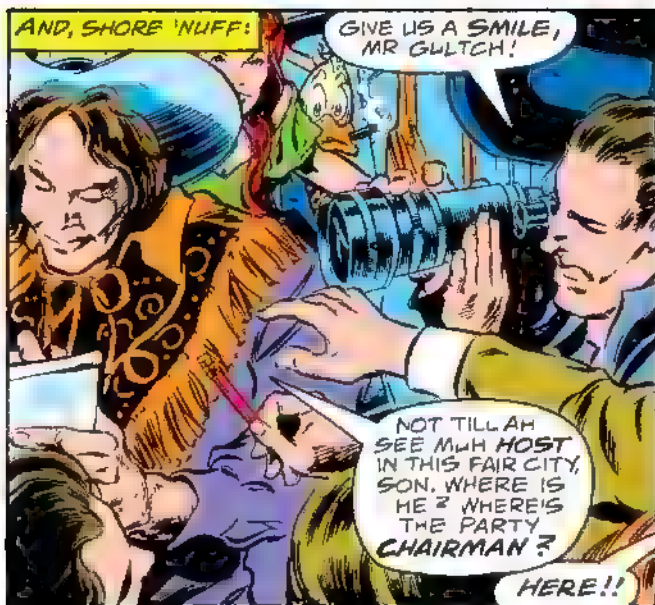
YOU FIGURE WE'LL HIT NEW YORK BY NOON? I WANTED TO TAKE A STROLL DOWN FIFTH AVENUE BEFORE--

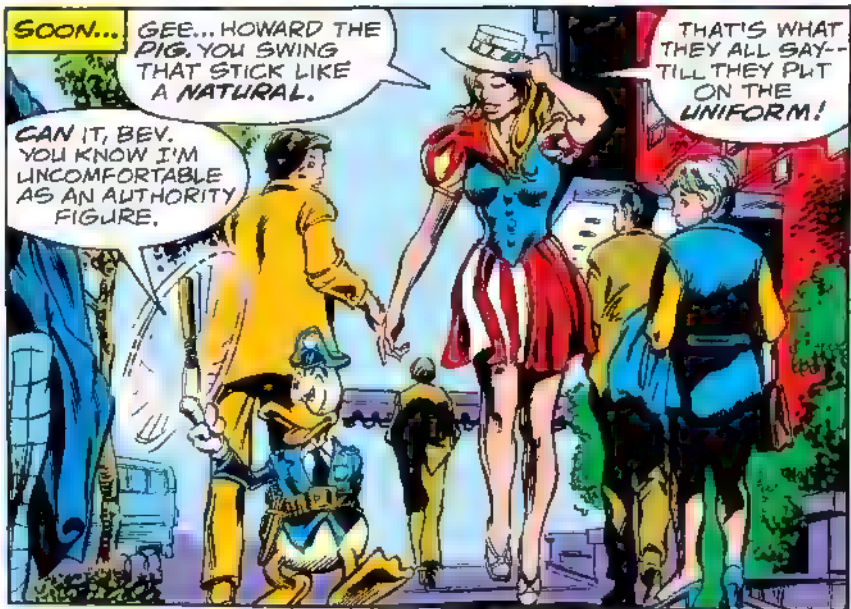
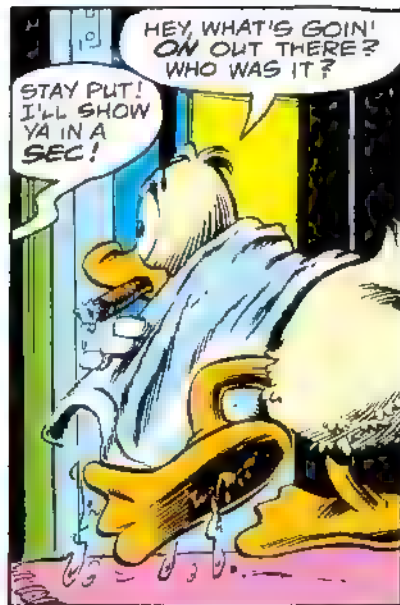
CHAPTER
II

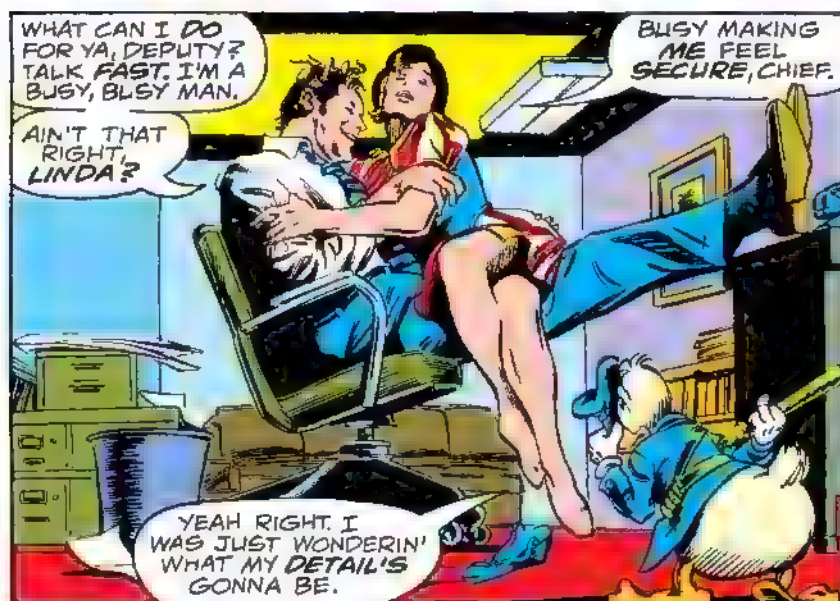
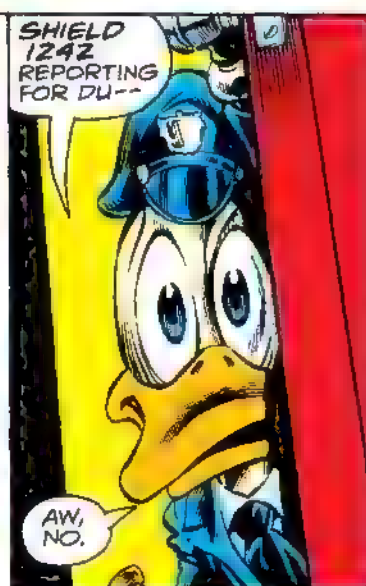
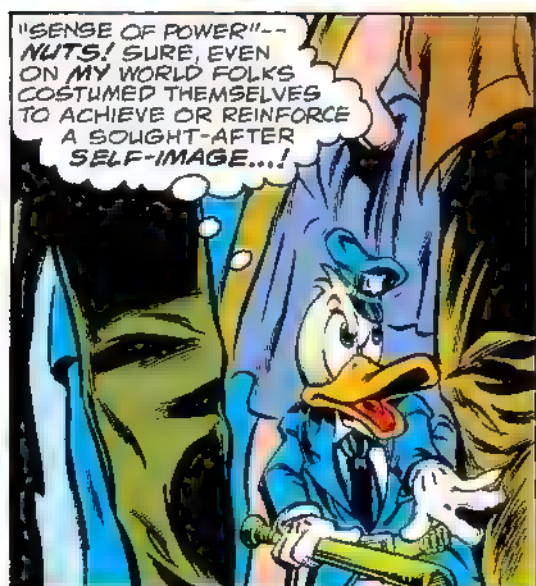
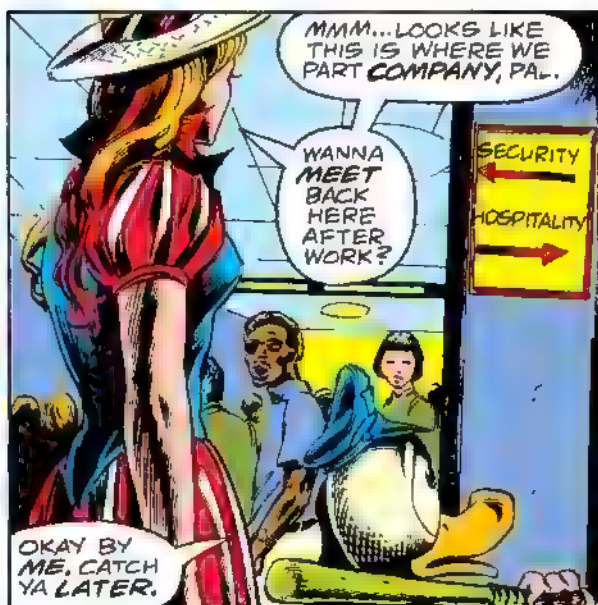
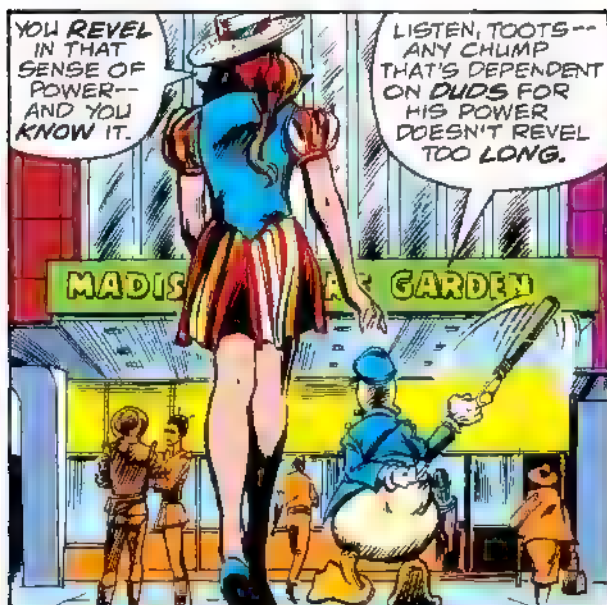
GET DOWN AMERICA!

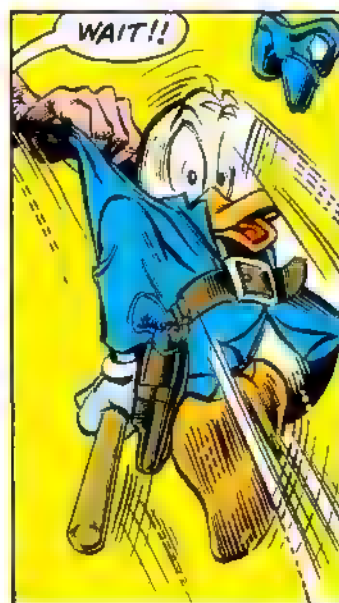
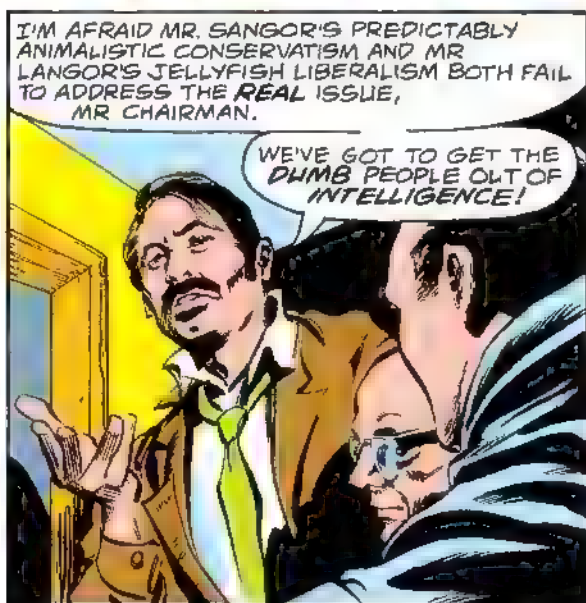
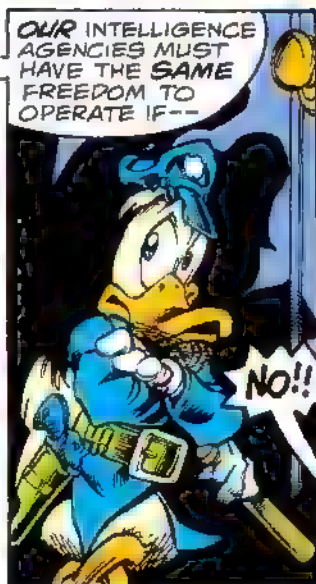
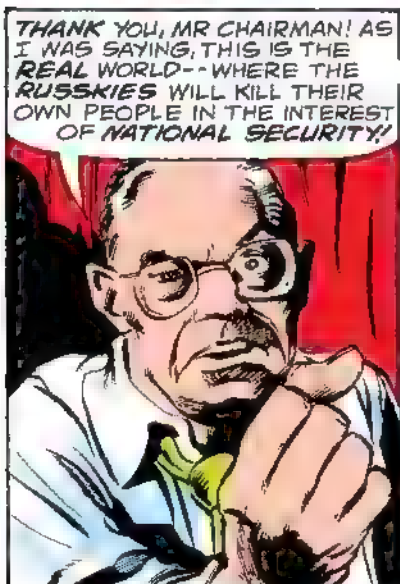
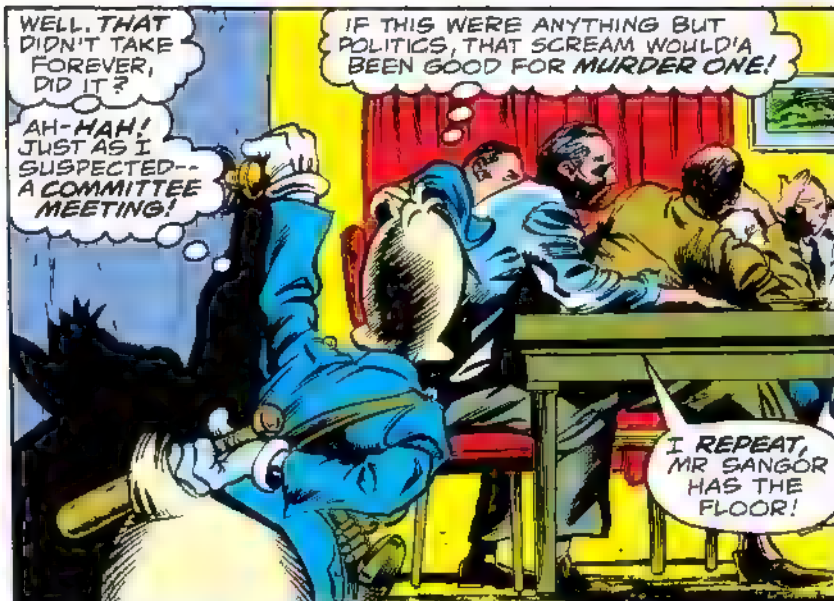


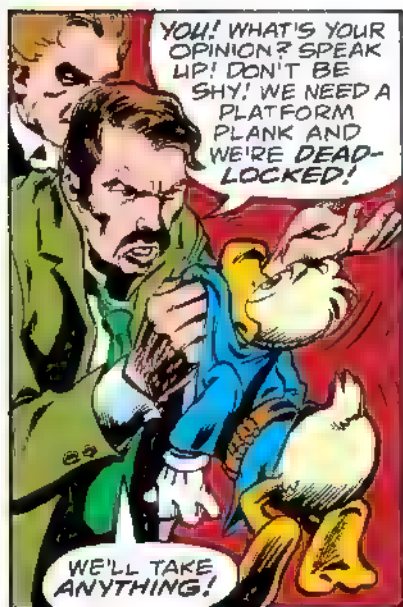






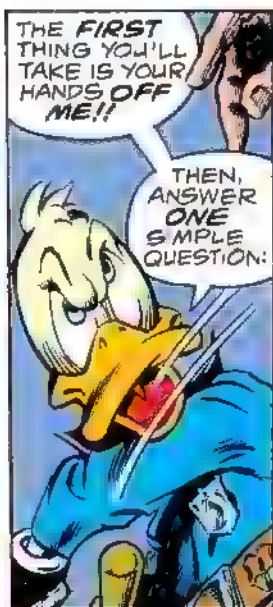






YOU! WHAT'S YOUR OPINION? SPEAK UP! DON'T BE SHY! WE NEED A PLATFORM PLANK AND WE'RE DEAD-LOCKED!

WE'LL TAKE ANYTHING!



THE FIRST THING YOU'LL TAKE IS YOUR HANDS OFF ME!!

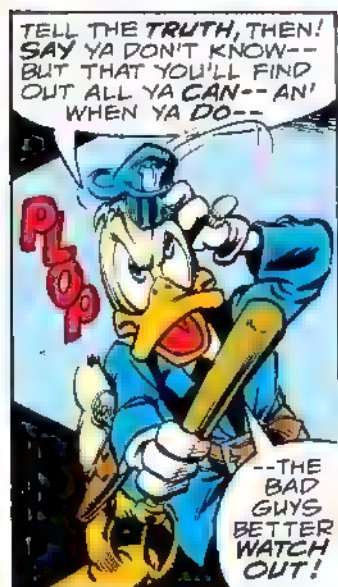
THEN, ANSWER ONE SIMPLE QUESTION:



"ANY O' YOU TURKEYS KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT INTELLIGENCE??"

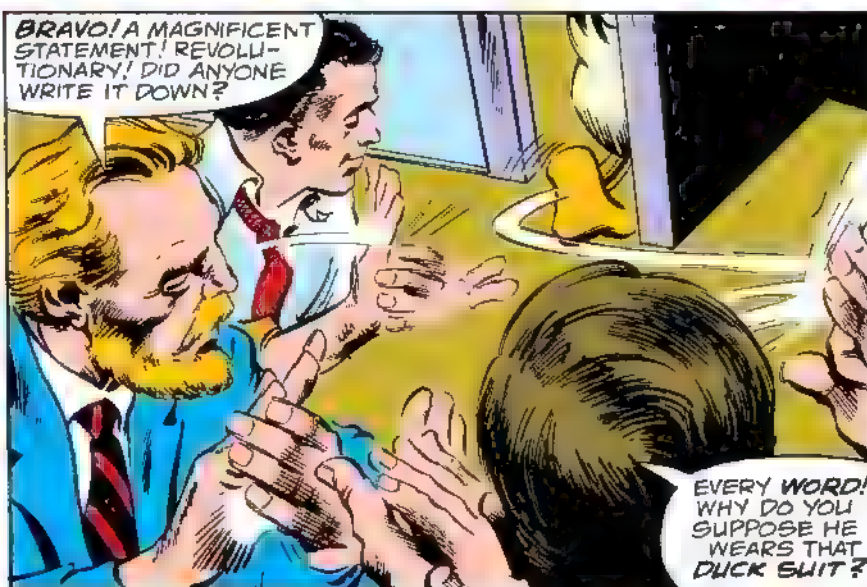
WELL...
EH...

NOT FIRST-HAND, BUT...



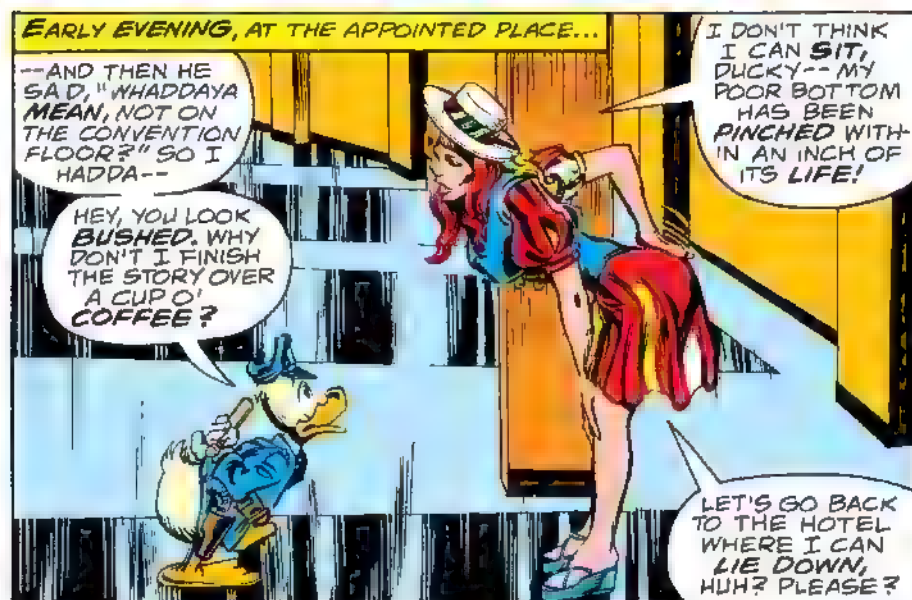
TELL THE TRUTH, THEN! SAY YA DON'T KNOW-- BUT THAT YOU'LL FIND OUT ALL YA CAN-- AN' WHEN YA DO--

--THE BAD GUYS BETTER WATCH OUT!



BRAVO! A MAGNIFICENT STATEMENT! REVOLUTIONARY! DID ANYONE WRITE IT DOWN?

EVERY WORD! WHY DO YOU SUPPOSE HE WEARS THAT DUCK SUIT?



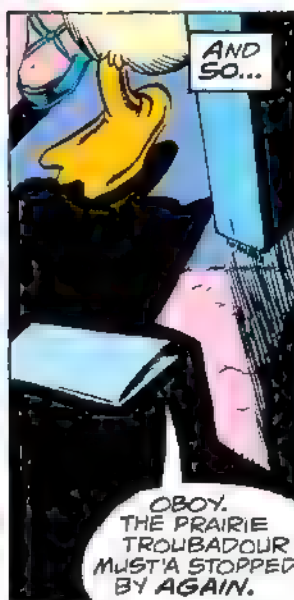
EARLY EVENING, AT THE APPOINTED PLACE...

--AND THEN HE SAID, "WHADDAYA MEAN, NOT ON THE CONVENTION FLOOR?" SO I HADDA--

HEY, YOU LOOK BUSHED. WHY DON'T I FINISH THE STORY OVER A CUP O' COFFEE?

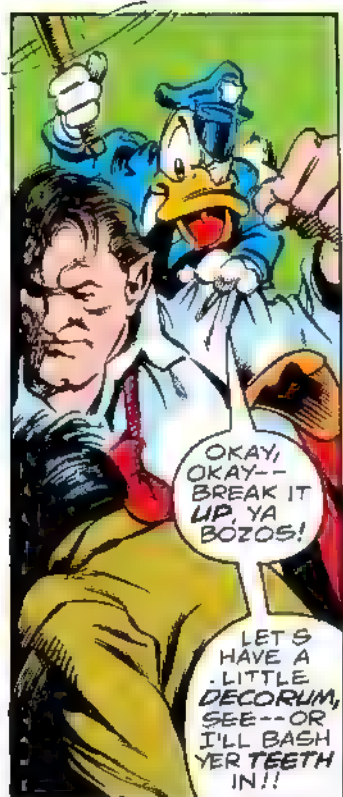
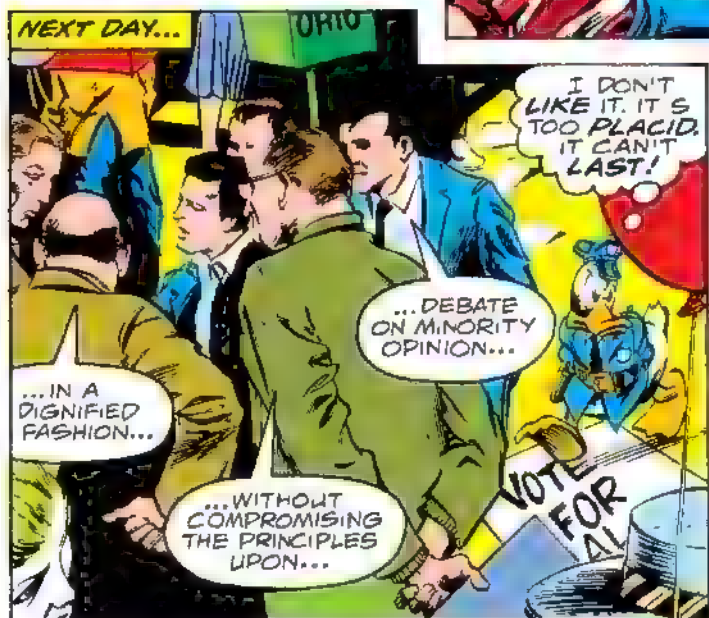
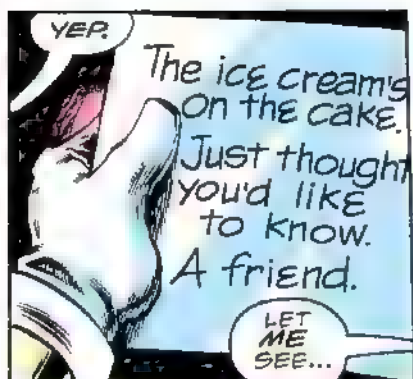
I DON'T THINK I CAN SIT, DUCKY-- MY POOR BOTTOM HAS BEEN PINCHED WITHIN AN INCH OF ITS LIFE!

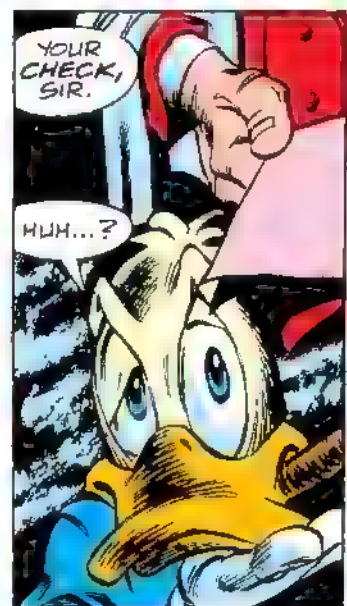
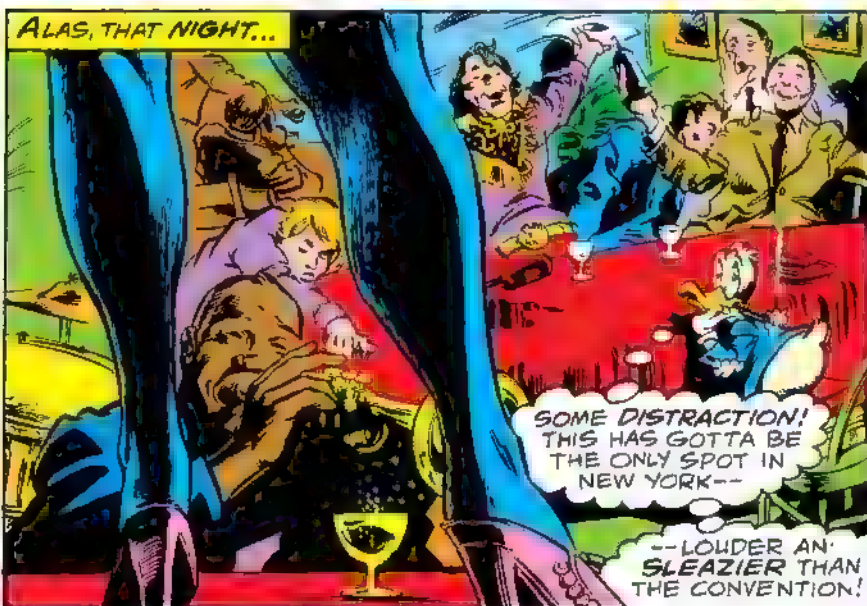
LET'S GO BACK TO THE HOTEL WHERE I CAN LIE DOWN, HUH? PLEASE?

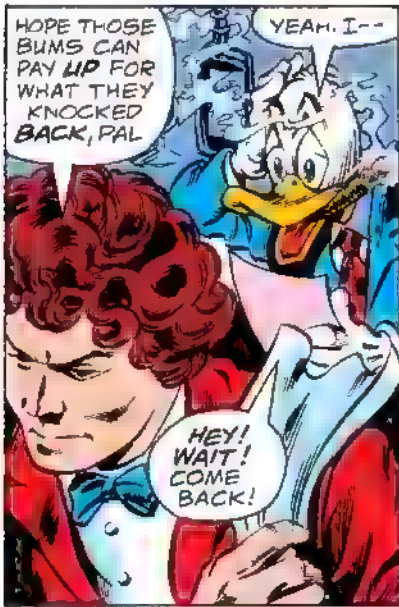


AND SO...

OBOY. THE PRAIRIE TROUBADOUR MUST'A STOPPED BY AGAIN.







HOPE THOSE BUMS CAN PAY UP FOR WHAT THEY KNOCKED BACK, PAL

YEAH. I--

HEY!
WAIT!
COME
BACK!



BLUE GARTER
GUEST CHECK

It's all in the oven.
Just thought you'd
like to know.

Beverages— \$74.32

--A friend

IT'S OUR PLE
TO SERVE



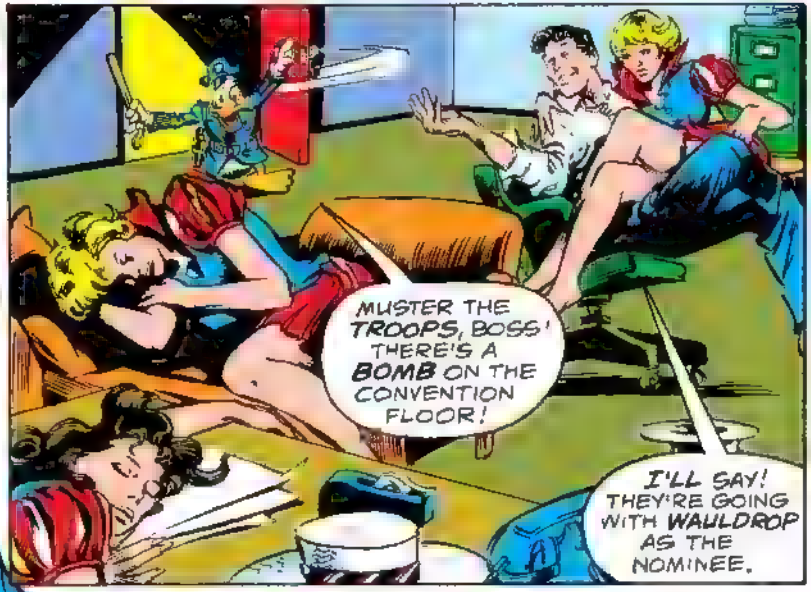
NEXT DAY:

I DON'T GET IT, SOUNDS
MORE LIKE SOMEBODY'S
MAKING BAKED ALASKA
THAN PLOTTING
ANYTHING SINISTER.

RIGHT, WE GOT A
COMPULSIVELY SHY
RECIPE AUTHOR
ON OUR--

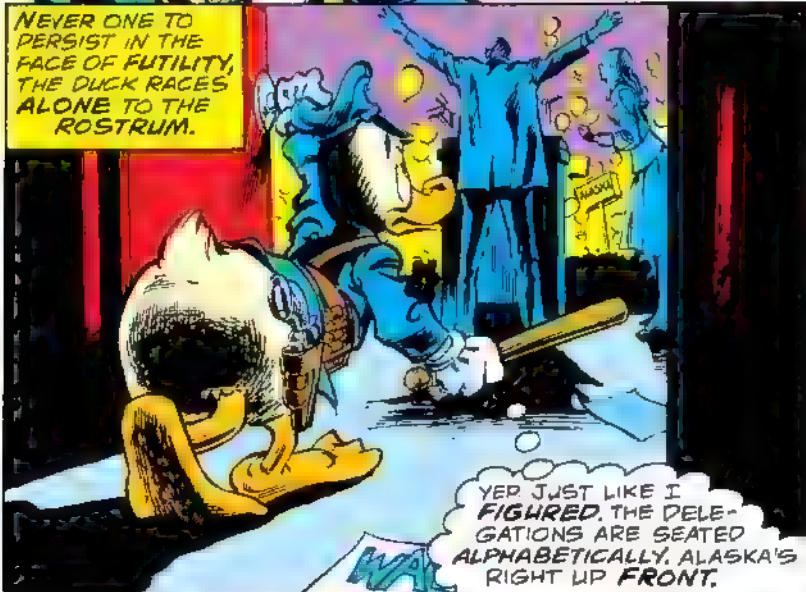


LATER,
BEV! I GOTTA
REPORT TO THE
CHIEF--
FAST!



MUSTER THE
TROOPS, BOSS!
THERE'S A
BOMB ON THE
CONVENTION
FLOOR!

I'LL SAY!
THEY'RE GOING
WITH WAULDROP
AS THE
NOMINEE.



NEVER ONE TO
PERSIST IN THE
FACE OF FUTILITY,
THE DUCK RACES
ALONE TO THE
ROSTRUM.

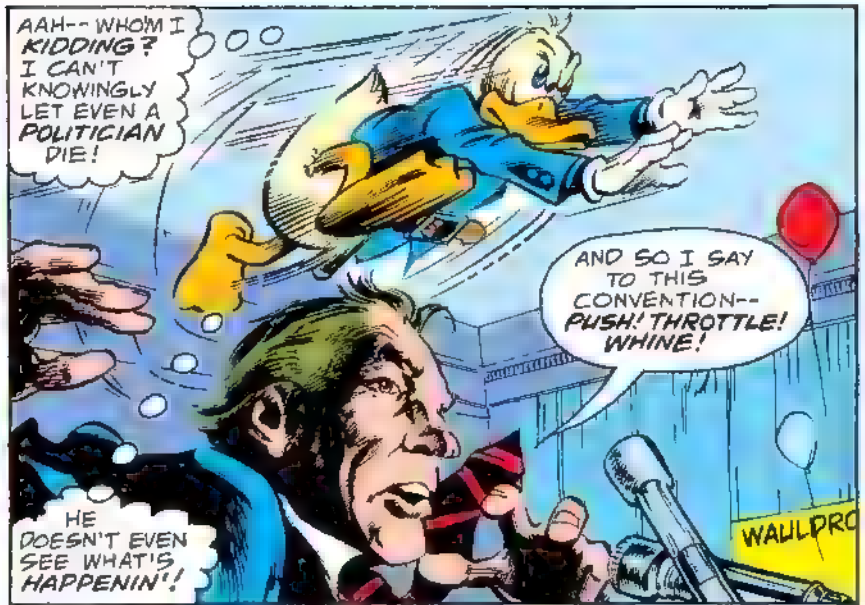
YED JUST LIKE I
FIGURED. THE DELE-
GATIONS ARE SEATED
ALPHABETICALLY. ALASKA'S
RIGHT UP FRONT.



SO NOW I GOTTA ASK MY-
SELF-- DO I REALLY WANNA
GET INVOLVED IN THIS? OR
WOULD THE SUPERIOR DUCK
JUST SCRAM AND SAVE HIS
OWN TAIL FEATHERS?



IT'S NOT
LIKE ANY-
BODY'D
MISS
WALDROP

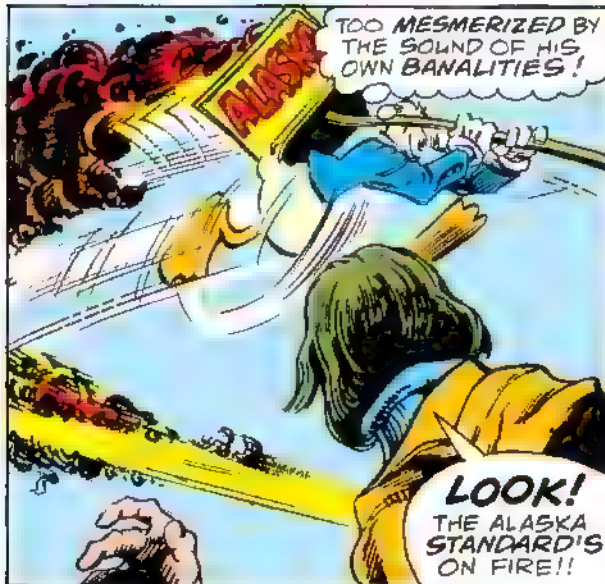


AAH-- WHOM I
KIDDING?
I CAN'T
KNOWINGLY
LET EVEN A
POLITICIAN
DIE!

HE
DOESN'T EVEN
SEE WHAT'S
HAPPENIN'!

AND SO I SAY
TO THIS
CONVENTION--
PUSH! THROTTLE!
WHINE!

WALDROP



TOO MESMERIZED BY
THE SOUND OF HIS
OWN BANALITIES!

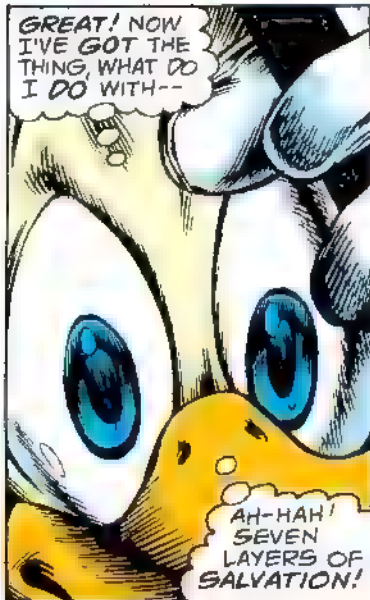
LOOK!
THE ALASKA
STANDARD'S
ON FIRE!!



FIRE, NOTHIN'!
IT'S A BOMB!
EVERYBODY--

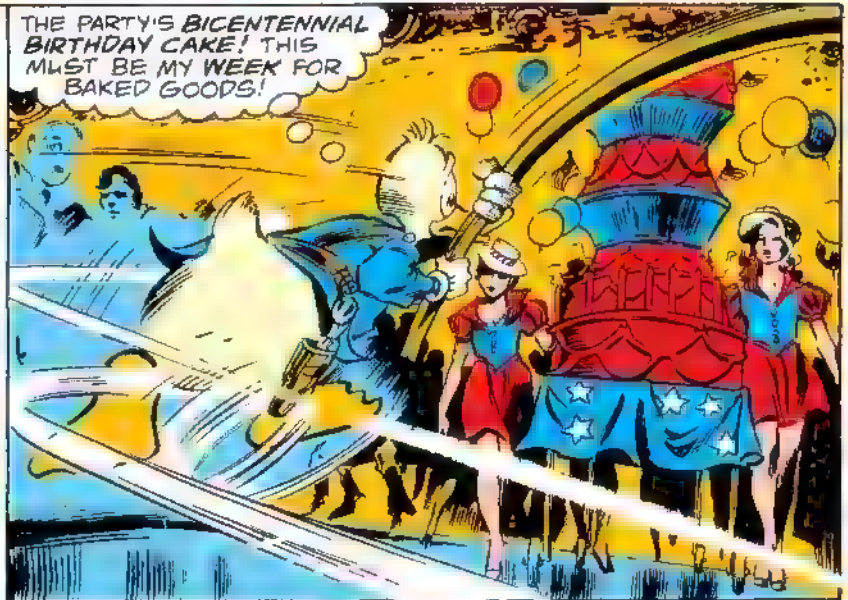
--SCATTER!!

EEEEEE

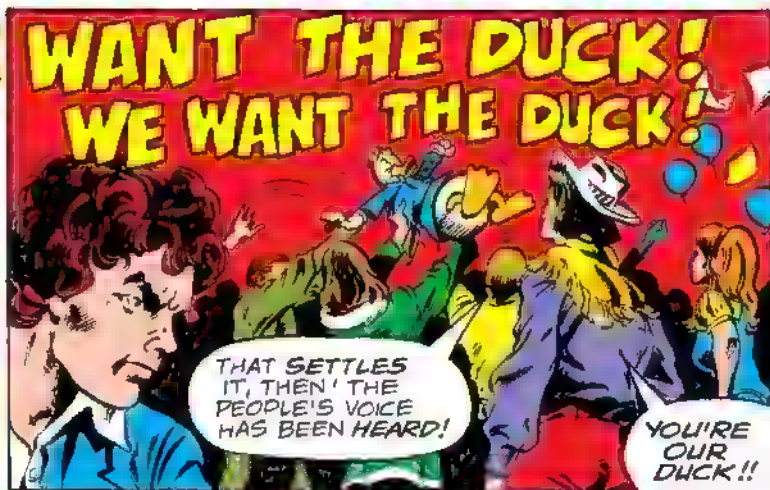
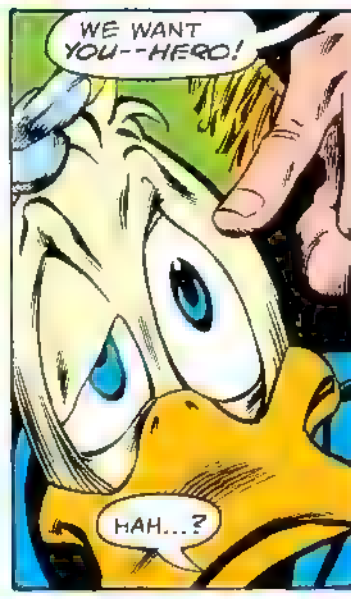
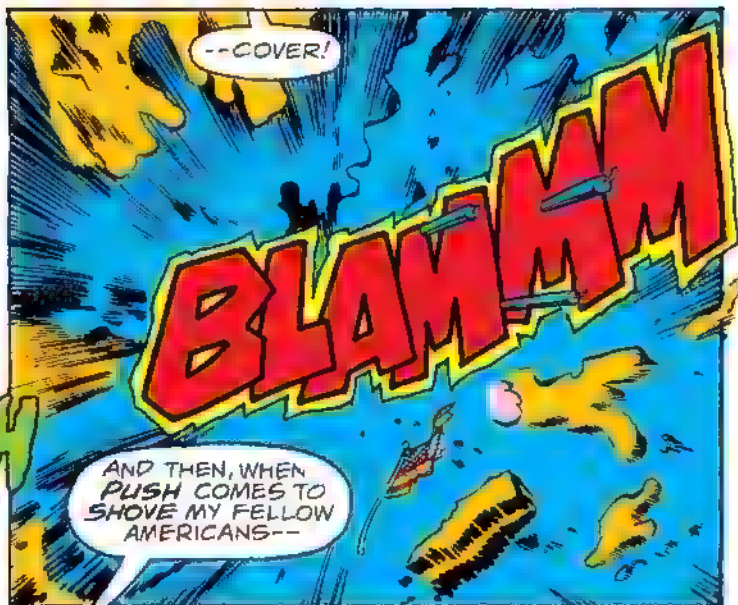
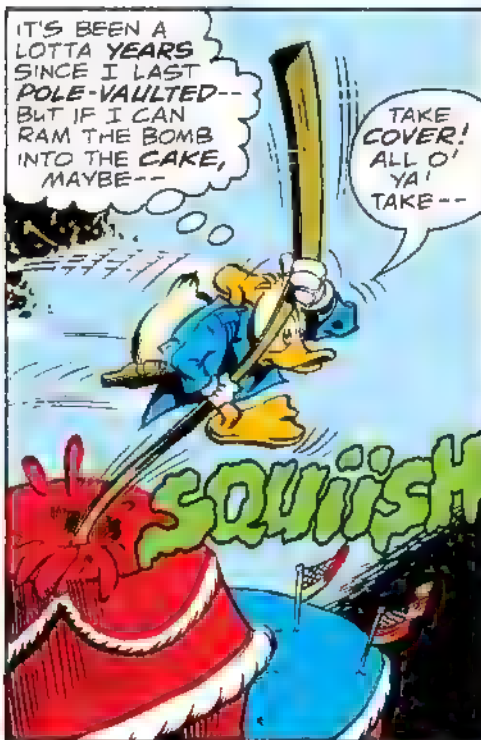


GREAT! NOW
I'VE GOT THE
THING, WHAT DO
I DO WITH--

AH-HAH!
SEVEN
LAYERS OF
SALVATION!



THE PARTY'S BICENTENNIAL
BIRTHDAY CAKE! THIS
MUST BE MY WEEK FOR
BAKED GOODS!



NEXT **OPEN SEASON** OR: "THE ROAD TO THE WHITE HOUSE IS PAVED WITH SHELL-CASINGS"

12
1976
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HOWARD



HOWARD

ARD



GET
DOWN,
AMERICA



HOWARD

FIVE VILLAINS IN SEARCH OF A PLOT!

THEY'RE
HERE--
JUST AS
HE SAID
THEY'D
BE.

YEP. RIGHT HERE
IN CENTRAL PARK--
AT MIDNIGHT!

Oh, ♪
Suzanna
♪ ♪

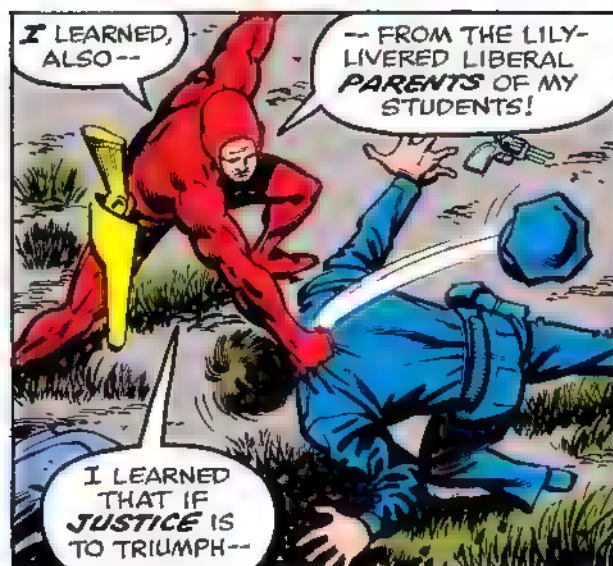
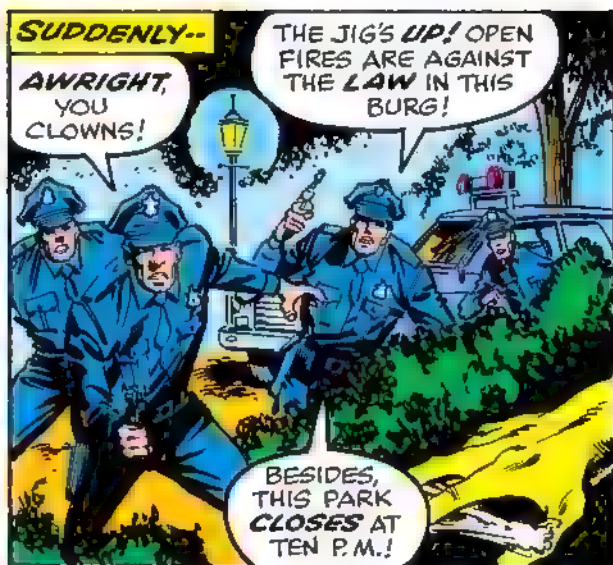
SAHWOHL!
SO LET'S GET
THIS MARSH-
MALLOW
ROAST
COOKIN'--

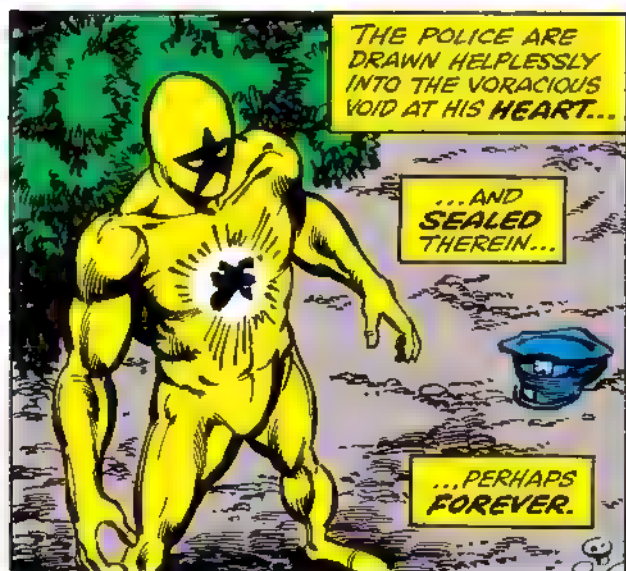
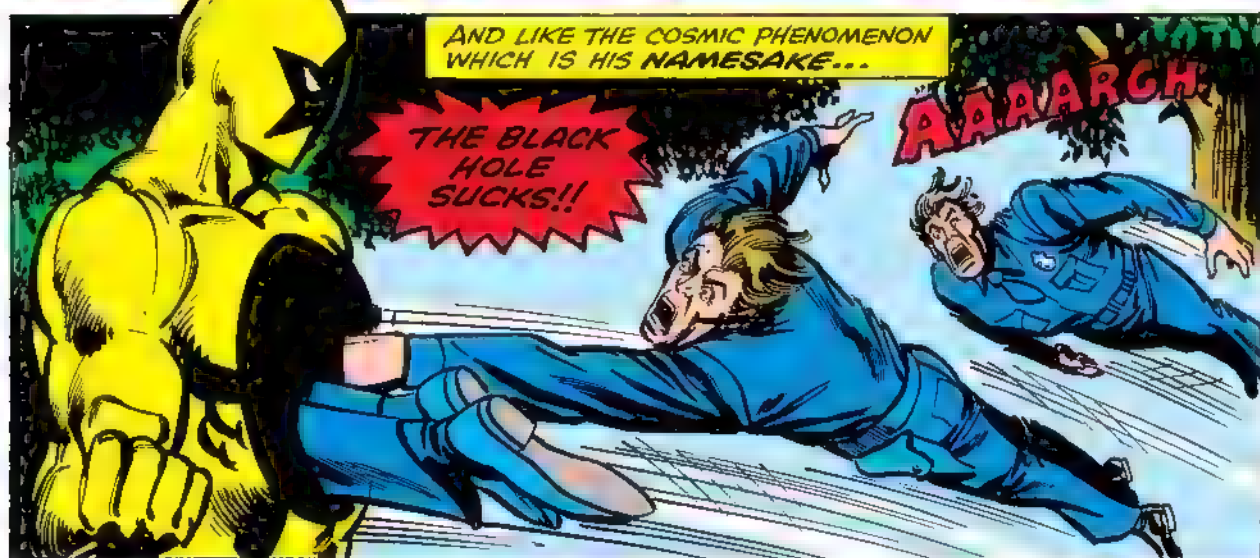
-- YOU
SWINE!

INTRODUCE
YOURSELVES--
ALL OF YOU--
OR I'LL GIVE
YOU SUCH A
LICKIN'--!











YES! YES!
IT'S UGLY--
LOATHESOME--
UNSPEAKABLY
GROTESQUE--

--KNOWING
IT WAS *I* WHO
SUMMONED
YOU FOUR TO
THIS PLACE--
I WHO PRE-
CIPITATED
THE *DEATHS*
OF THOSE
INNOCENT
MEN--!

--IT'S PSYCHOLOGI-
CAL TORTURE!!



AND I'M *LOVING*
EVERY HORRIFIC
MINUTE OF IT!



FOR I AM *DR. ANGST*, MASTER OF MUNDANE
MYSTICISM--

--AND AS
GLORIOUS
A *WASH-
OUT* AS
ANY OF
YOU!



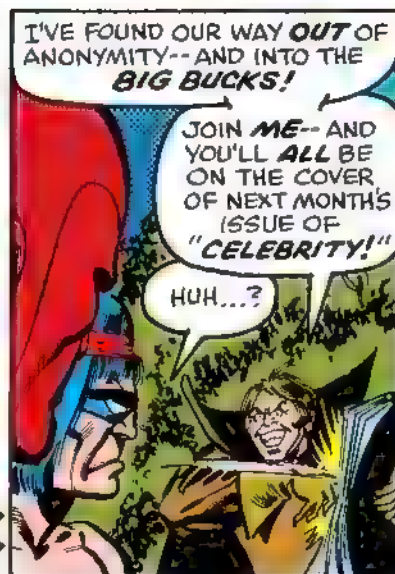
DON'T ATTEMPT TO *DENY* IT! WE ALL
SHARE A COMMON FAULT! *NONE* OF US
HAS EVER HAD AN
ORIGINAL THOUGHT
IN HIS OR HER LIFE!

THAT'S WHY--
DESPITE OUR
PRODIGIOUS
TALENTS--NO ONE'S
EVER HEARD OF
ANY OF US!



WE'RE TOO
DERIVATIVE--TOO
STEREOTYPICAL--

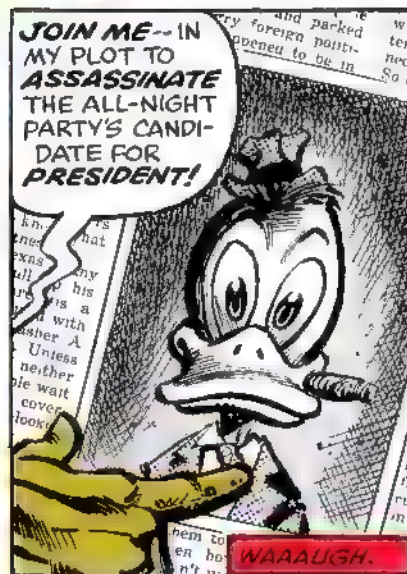
--EVEN TO
MAKE NAMES FOR
OURSELVES AS
SUPER-VILLAINS! **BUT NO MORE!!**



I'VE FOUND OUR WAY *OUT* OF
ANONYMITY--AND INTO THE
BIG BUCKS!

JOIN *ME*-- AND
YOU'LL *ALL* BE
ON THE COVER
OF NEXT MONTH'S
ISSUE OF
"CELEBRITY!"

HUH...?



JOIN *ME*-- IN
MY PLOT TO
ASSASSINATE
THE ALL-NIGHT
PARTY'S CANDI-
DATE FOR
PRESIDENT!

WAAAAUGH.

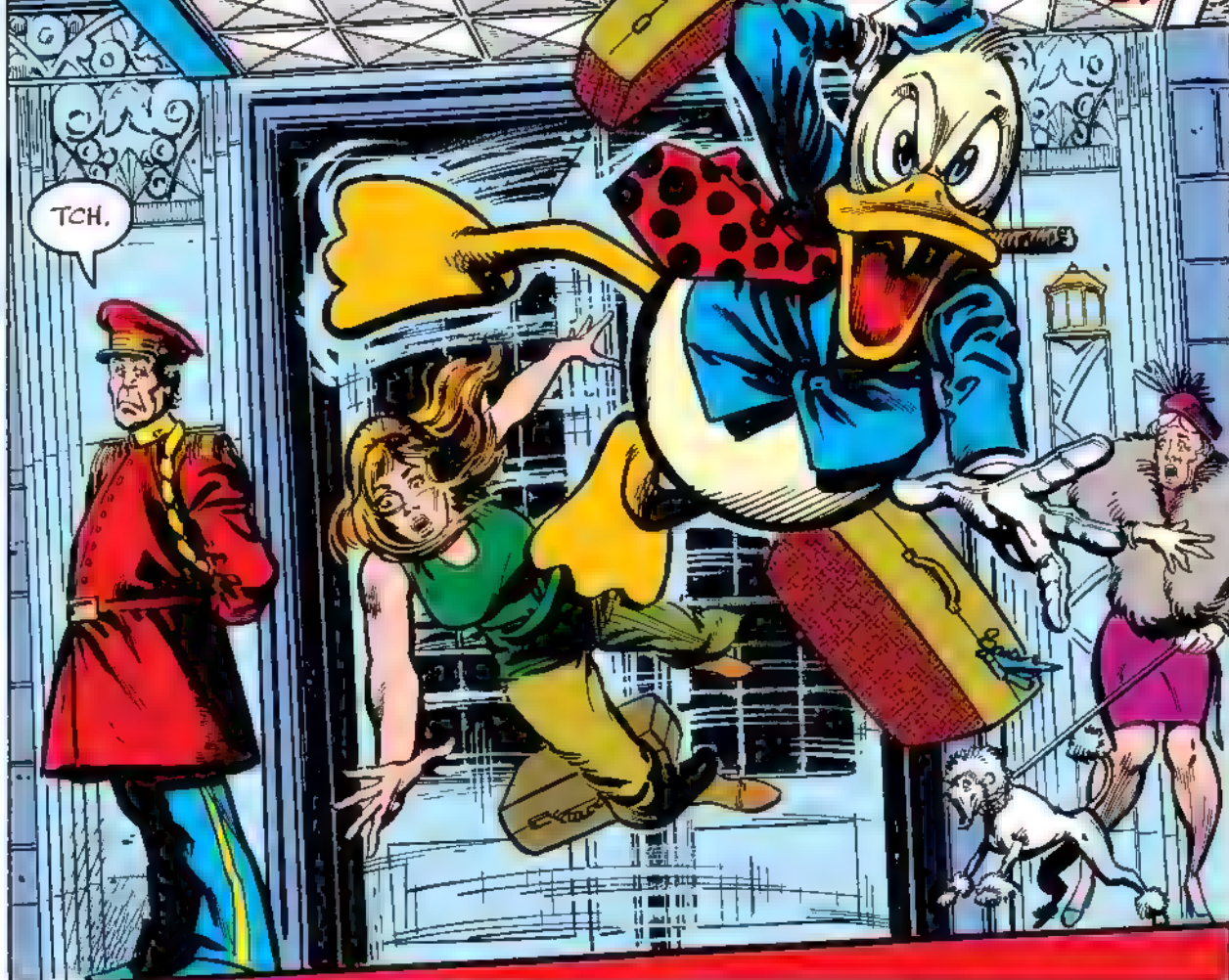
the DUCK and THE DEFENDERS

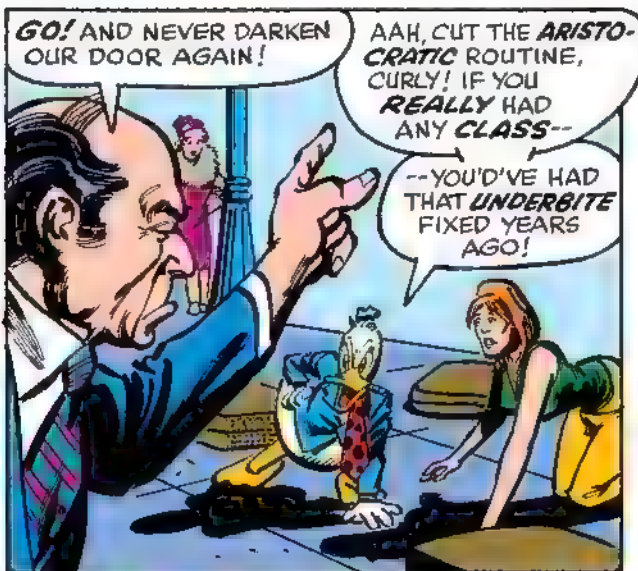
QUIET DIGNITY AND UNDERSTATED ELEGANCE ARE THE **HALLMARKS** OF NEW YORK'S PARKSIDE PLAZA HOTEL.

EVEN WHEN THE MANAGEMENT **BOOTS** A GUEST OUT ONTO THE SIDEWALK FOR NON-PAYMENT OF HIS **BILL**, THE MATTER IS HANDLED WITH **TASTE**.

WAAAH

TCH.

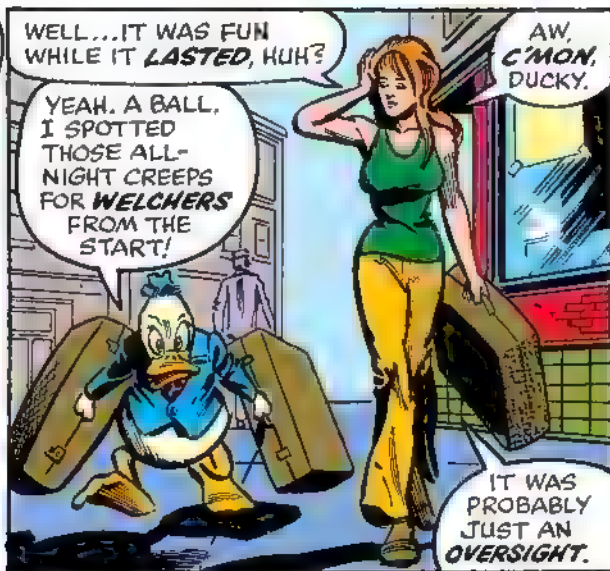




GO! AND NEVER DARKEN OUR DOOR AGAIN!

AAH, CUT THE **ARISTOCRATIC** ROUTINE, CURLY! IF YOU **REALLY** HAD ANY **CLASS**--

--YOU'D'VE HAD THAT **UNDERBITE** FIXED YEARS AGO!

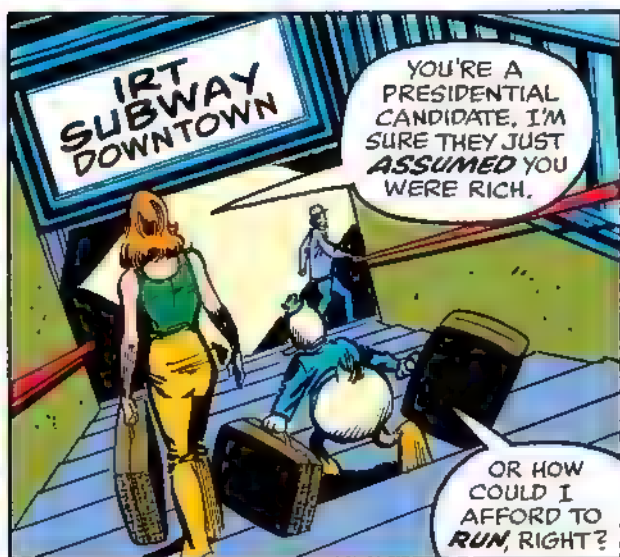


WELL...IT WAS FUN WHILE IT **LASTED**, HUH?

AW, C'MON, DUCKY.

YEAH. A BALL, I SPOTTED THOSE ALL-NIGHT CREEPS FOR **WELCHERS** FROM THE START!

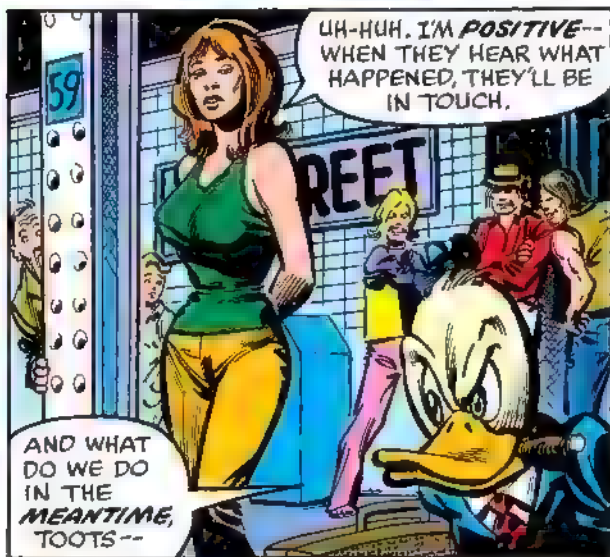
IT WAS PROBABLY JUST AN **OVERSIGHT**.



IRT
SUBWAY
DOWNTOWN

YOU'RE A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, I'M SURE THEY JUST **ASSUMED** YOU WERE RICH.

OR HOW COULD I AFFORD TO **RUN**, RIGHT?



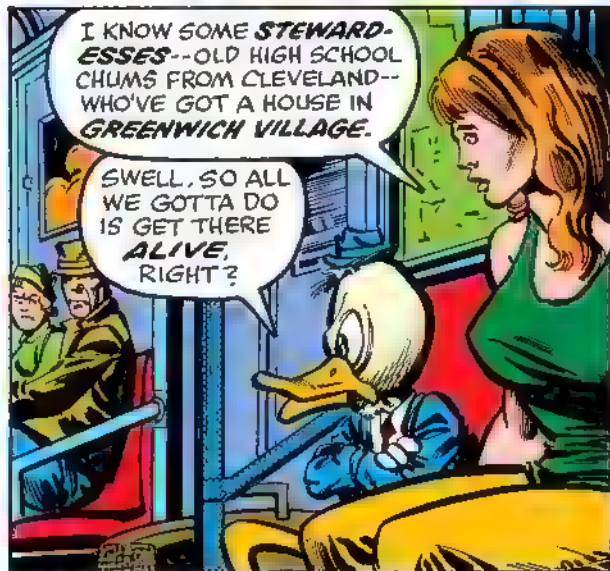
UH-HUH. I'M **POSITIVE**-- WHEN THEY HEAR WHAT HAPPENED, THEY'LL BE IN TOUCH.

AND WHAT DO WE DO IN THE **MEANTIME**, TOOTS--



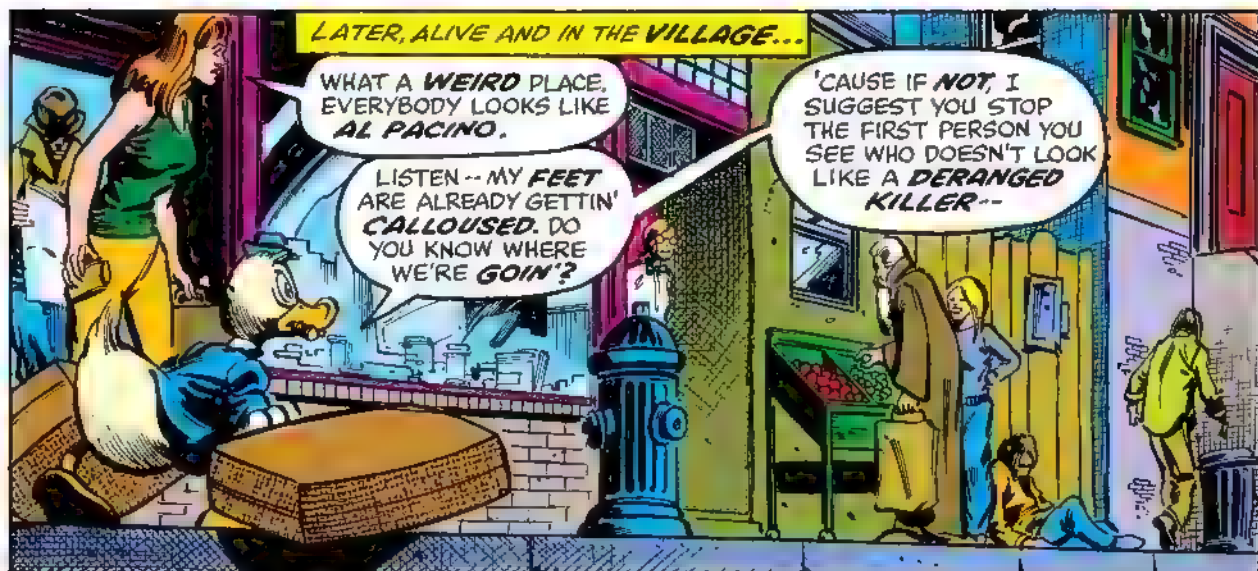
--RIDE BACK'N'FORTH BETWEEN HERE AND CONEY ISLAND 'TIL WE **DROP**?

NAH.



I KNOW SOME **STEWARDESSES**--OLD HIGH SCHOOL CHUMS FROM CLEVELAND--WHO'VE GOT A HOUSE IN **GREENWICH VILLAGE**.

SWELL, SO ALL WE GOTTA DO IS GET THERE **ALIVE**, RIGHT?



LATER, ALIVE AND IN THE VILLAGE...

WHAT A **WEIRD** PLACE, EVERYBODY LOOKS LIKE **AL PACINO**.

LISTEN-- MY **FEET** ARE ALREADY GETTIN' **CALLOUSED**. DO YOU KNOW WHERE WE'RE **GOIN'**?

'CAUSE IF **NOT**, I SUGGEST YOU STOP THE FIRST PERSON YOU SEE WHO DOESN'T LOOK LIKE A **DERANGED KILLER**--

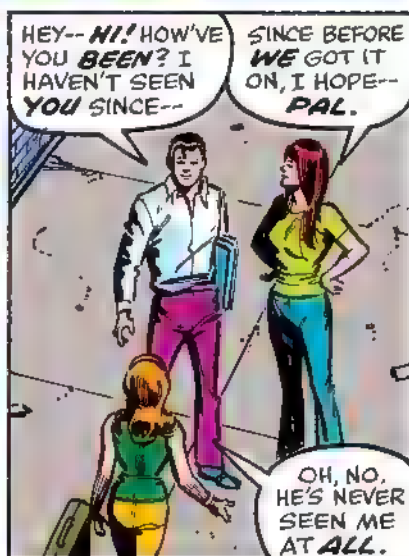


--AND ASK **DIRECTIONS**. RIGHT!



EXCUSE ME, **YOU** LOOK PRETTY HARMLESS, COULD YOU--?

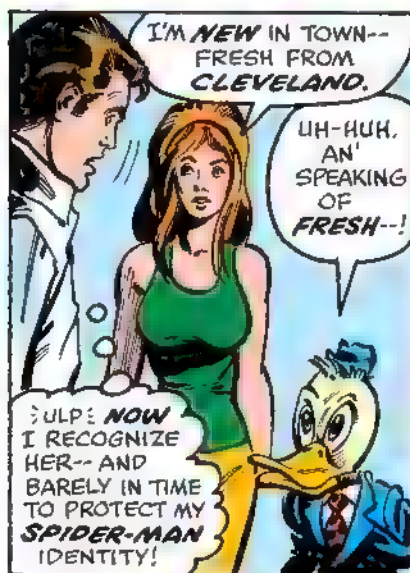
I BEG YOUR **PARDON**?



HEY-- **HI!** HOW'VE YOU **BEEN**? I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU SINCE--

SINCE BEFORE **WE** GOT IT ON, I HOPE-- **PAL**.

OH, NO, HE'S NEVER SEEN ME AT **ALL**.



I'M **NEW** IN TOWN-- FRESH FROM **CLEVELAND**.

UH-HUH, AN' SPEAKING OF **FRESH**--!

DULP! **NOW** I RECOGNIZE HER-- AND BARELY IN TIME TO PROTECT MY **SPIDER-MAN** IDENTITY!



SHE'S **BEVERLY SWITZLER**. I'D KNOW HER **DUCK** ANYWHERE!

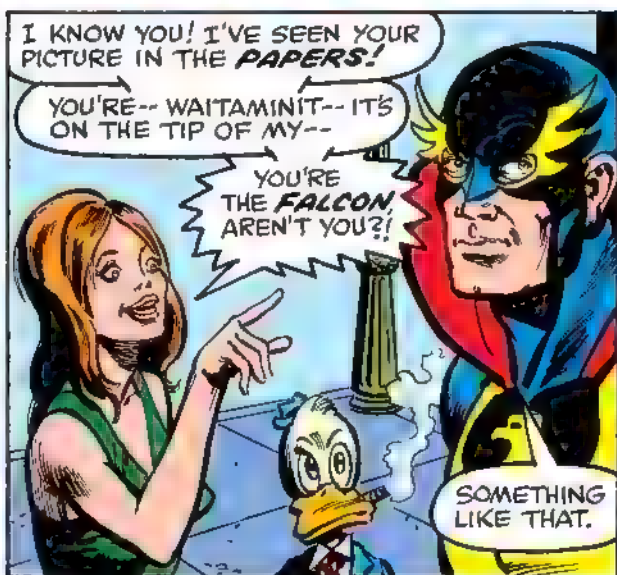
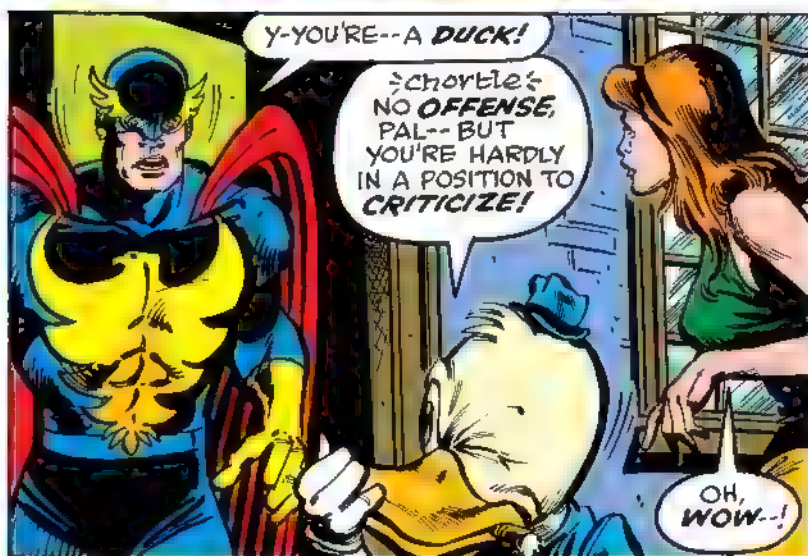
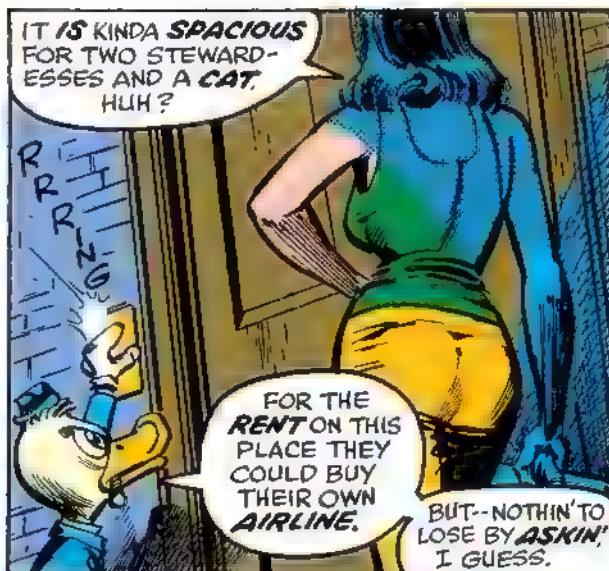
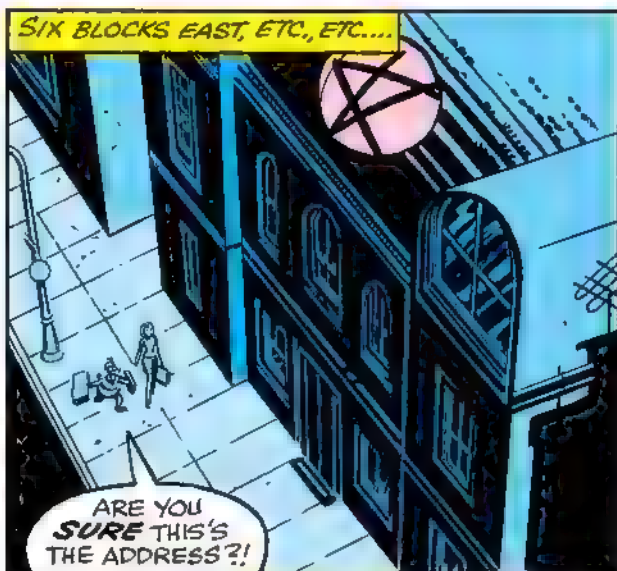
I, UH-- I'M **SORRY**. SHE LOOKS JUST LIKE--

CHARLES STREET? SURE!



"SIX BLOCKS EAST AND HANG A LEFT," SHE SAID.

WHATEVER--AS LONG AS WE'RE TRUDGIN' **AWAY** FROM THAT BABY-FACED **MASHER**!



IN RESPONSE TO NIGHTHAWK'S SUMMONS, THREE IMPOSING FIGURES EMERGE FROM THE DOUBLE-DOORS OF THE PARLOR.

**THE INCREDIBLE
HULK: BRUTAL,
BESTIAL BEHEMOTH
BORN OF GAMMA
RAYS!**

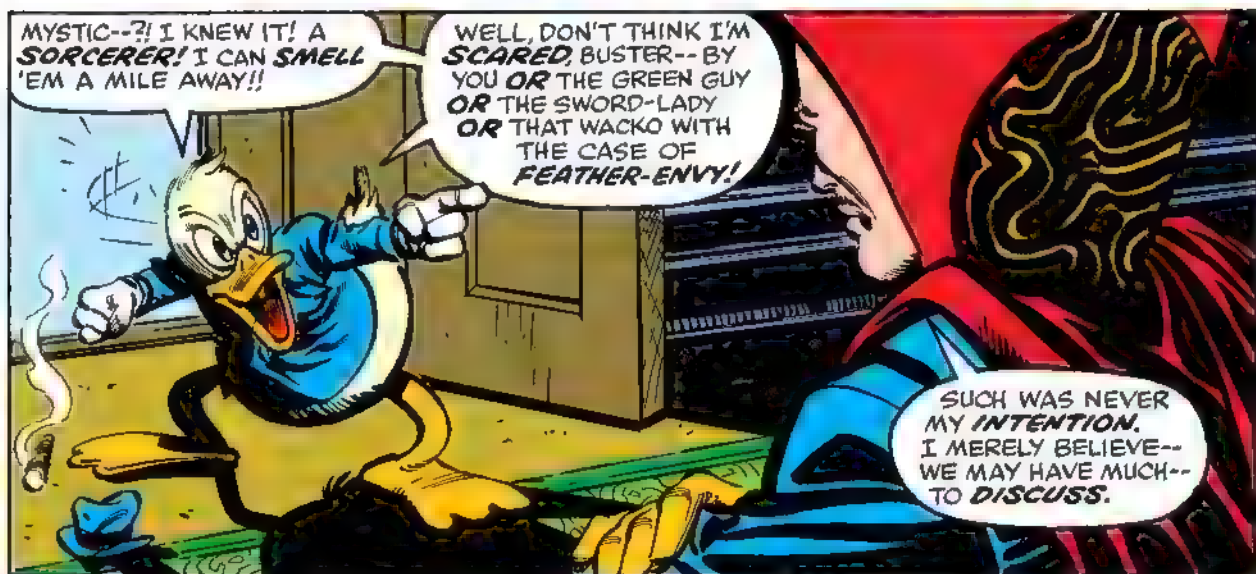
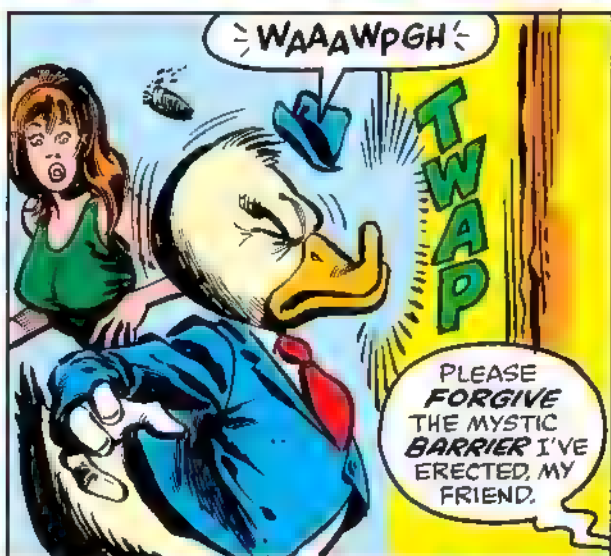
**VALKYRIE:
LIVING
EMBODIMENT
OF AN
ANCIENT
NORSE
LEGEND!**

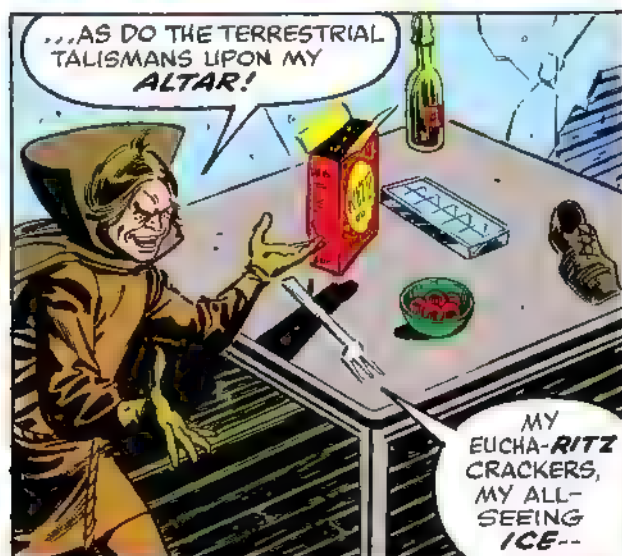
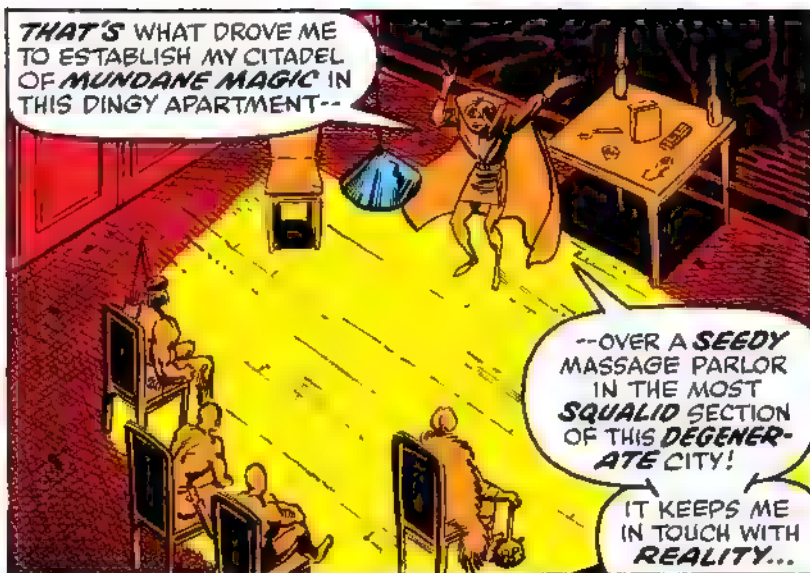
**DR. STRANGE:
MASTER OF THE
MYSTIC ARTS, AND,
INCIDENTALLY,
OWNER OF THIS
SANCTUM
SANCTORUM!**

TOGETHER
WITH NIGHTHAWK,
THEY FORM THE
NEXUS OF A LOOSE
CONFEDERATION OF
SUPERHUMANS
KNOWN AS THE
DEFENDERS!

NATURALLY. A WHOLE
NEST OF ZANIES. MY
DAY IS COMPLETE.









THAT'S RIGHT--
COME AND
GET IT--

--THE COURAGE
TO **CREATE**,
TO **QUESTION**,
TO **EXPLORE**.

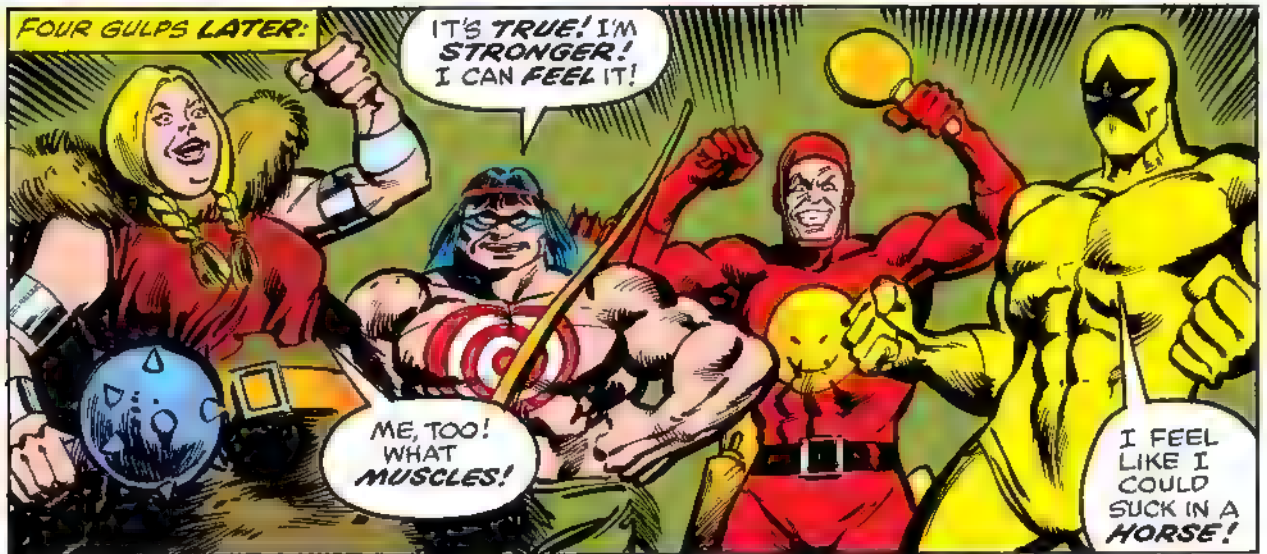


H-HEY--THESE
THINGS'RE **RED**
HOT!! WHADDA
WE **DO** WITH
'EM?!



SWALLOW THEM, MY FRIENDS.
MANUAL MANIPULATION OF
YOUR SPHERES AMOUNTS TO
MERE **POSTURING**.

THEY MUST BE
INTERNALIZED.



FOUR GULPS LATER:

IT'S **TRUE!** I'M
STRONGER!
I CAN **FEEL** IT!

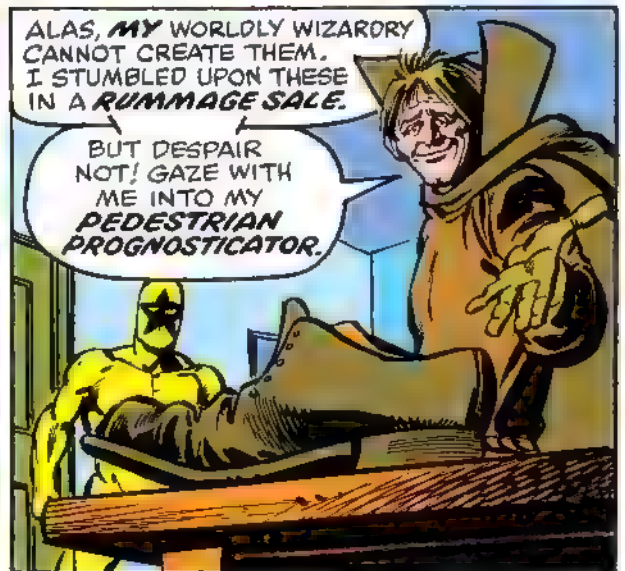
ME, TOO!
WHAT
MUSCLES!

I **FEEL**
LIKE I
COULD
SUCK IN A
HORSE!



OF COURSE, THE EFFECT
IS PURELY **TRANSITORY**.
TO PROLONG THE
INVIGORATION
INDEFINITELY--

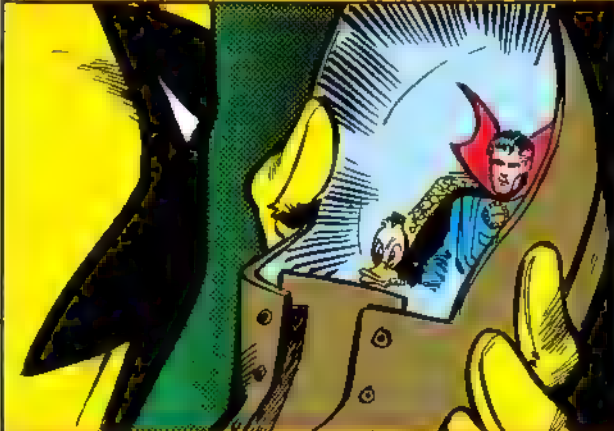
--ONE
REQUIRES A
LIFETIME
SUPPLY OF
SPHERES.



ALAS, **MY** WORLDLY WIZARDRY
CANNOT **CREATE** THEM.
I STUMBLED UPON THESE
IN A **RUMMAGE SALE**.

BUT **DESPAIR**
NOT! GAZE WITH
ME INTO MY
PEDESTRIAN
PROGNOSTICATOR.

"**THAT MAN HAS THE MYSTIC TOOLS WE NEED. WE MUST SEIZE THEM-- AND MAKE SOME CASH ON THE SIDE--**



"**--BY KILLING THE DUCK! WHAT SAY YOU?"**

IF THIS IS WHAT IT'S LIKE TO POSSESS SPHERES--

--LET'S GO GET 'EM!!

SO SAY WE ALL!!



EXCELLENT--

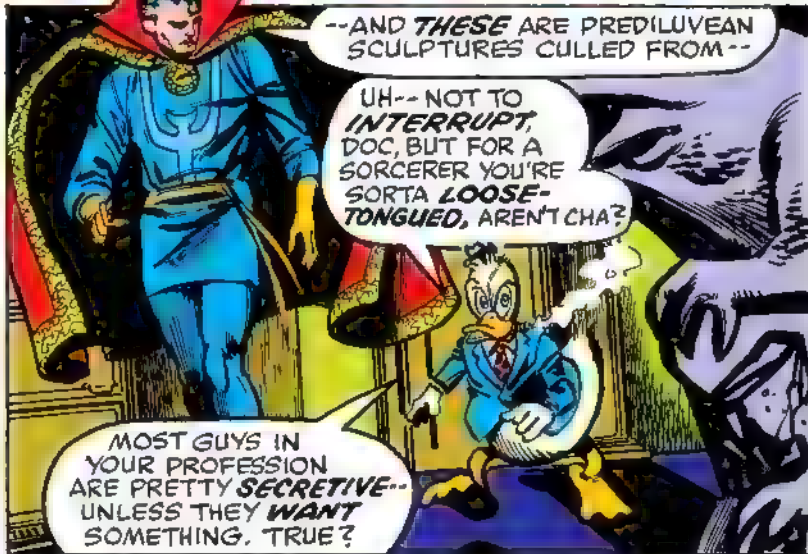
-- YOU FOOLS. HEH HEH



--AND THESE ARE PREDILUVIAN SCULPTURES CULLED FROM--

UH-- NOT TO INTERRUPT, DOC, BUT FOR A SORCERER YOU'RE SORTA LOOSE-TONGUED, AREN'T CHA?

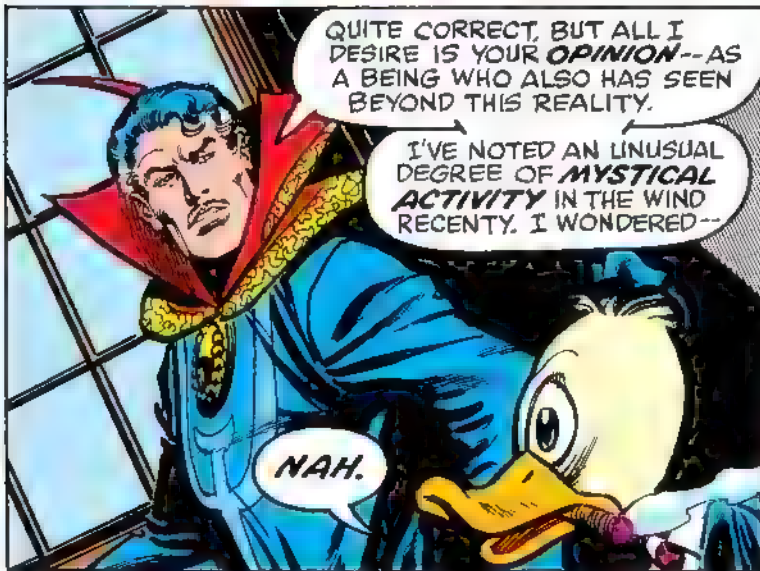
MOST GUYS IN YOUR PROFESSION ARE PRETTY SECRETIVE-- UNLESS THEY WANT SOMETHING. TRUE?



QUITE CORRECT, BUT ALL I DESIRE IS YOUR **OPINION**-- AS A BEING WHO ALSO HAS SEEN BEYOND THIS REALITY.

I'VE NOTED AN UNUSUAL DEGREE OF **MYSTICAL ACTIVITY** IN THE WIND RECENTLY. I WONDERED--

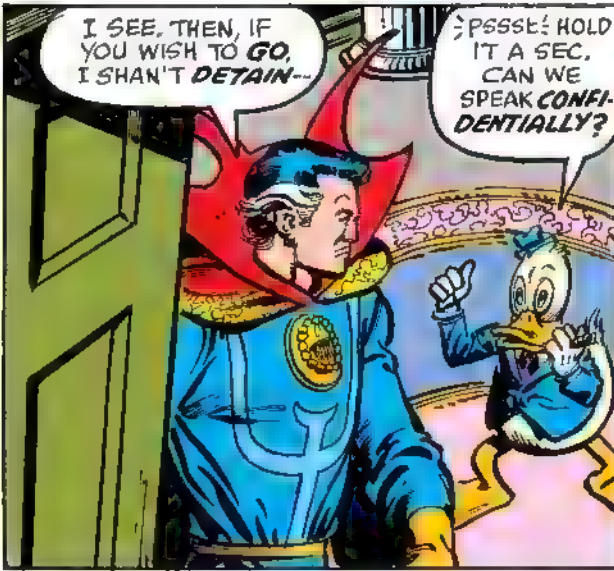
NAH.



CLOSEST I EVER CAME TO STIRRING UP MAGIC WAS AN **ACT** I USED TO DO AT **BIRTHDAY PARTIES**.

EVERYTHING ELSE, I JUST KINDA GOT STIRRED INTO.





I SEE, THEN, IF YOU WISH TO GO, I SHAN'T DETAIN--

PSSE! HOLD IT A SEC. CAN WE SPEAK CONFIDENTIALLY?



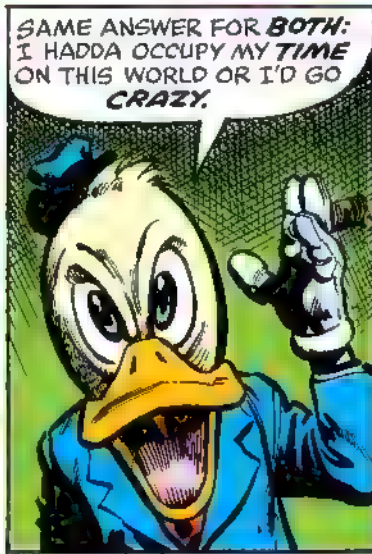
OF COURSE. WHAT--?

LISTEN... IF YOU'VE REALLY GOT ALL THIS ABRACADABRA STUFF DOWN PAT--

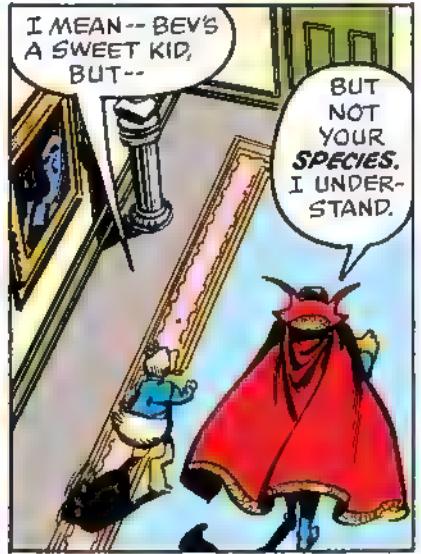
-- COULDJA SPARE JUST A DAB OF IT TA SEND ME HOME?



IT'S... POSSIBLE. BUT WHAT OF YOUR POLITICAL CAREER-- AND THE WOMAN BEVERLY?

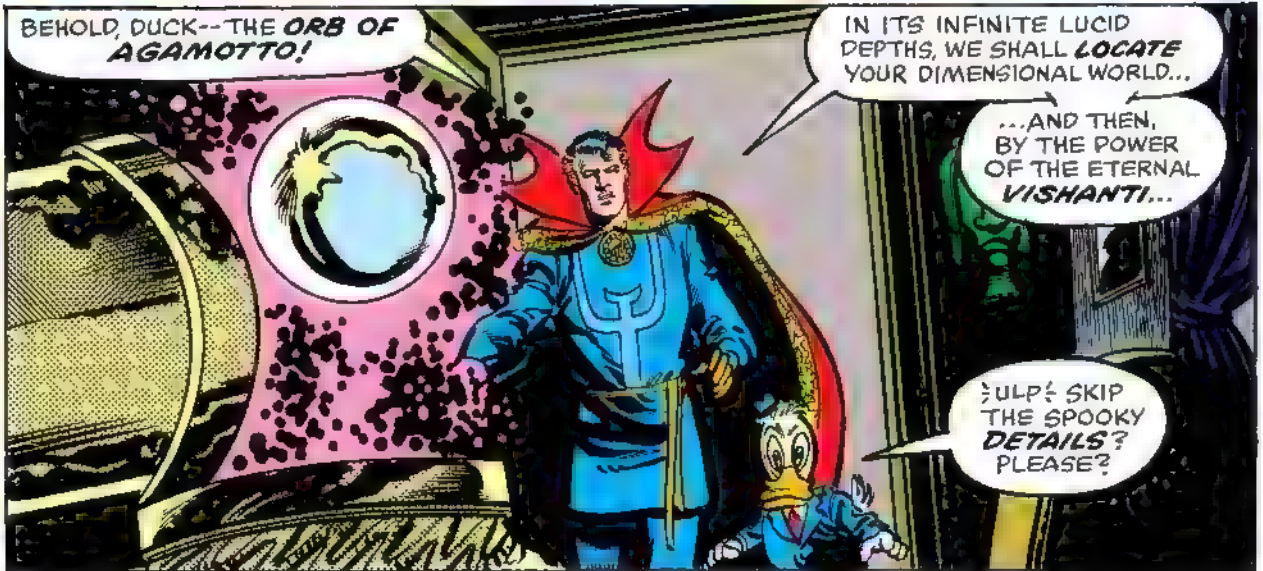


SAME ANSWER FOR BOTH: I HADDA OCCUPY MY TIME ON THIS WORLD OR I'D GO CRAZY.



I MEAN-- BEV'S A SWEET KID, BUT--

BUT NOT YOUR SPECIES. I UNDERSTAND.

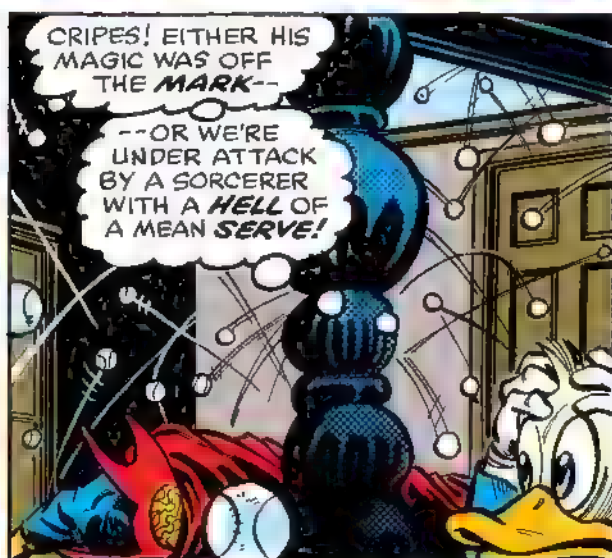
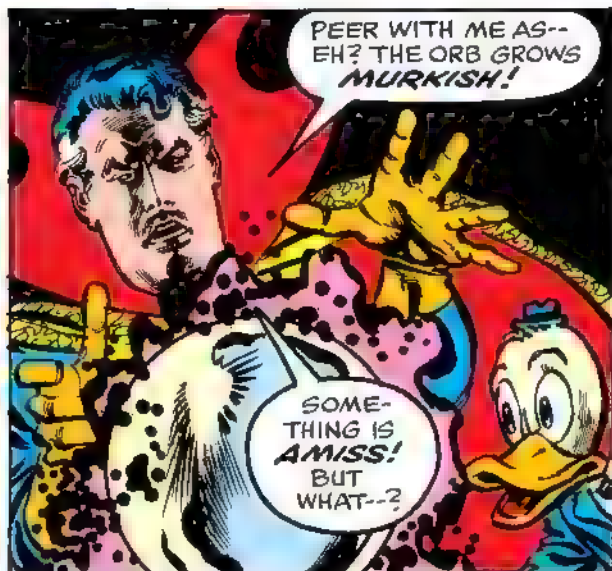


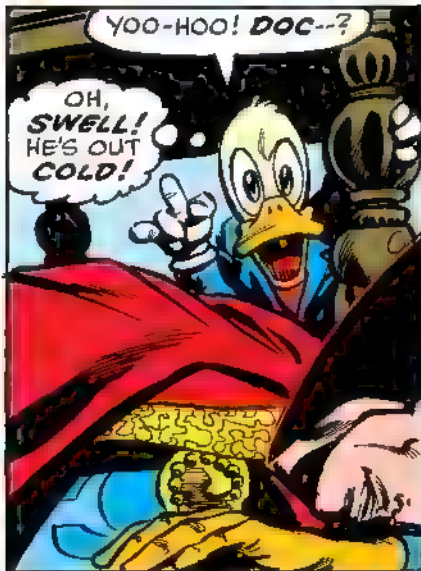
BEHOLD, DUCK-- THE ORB OF AGAMOTTO!

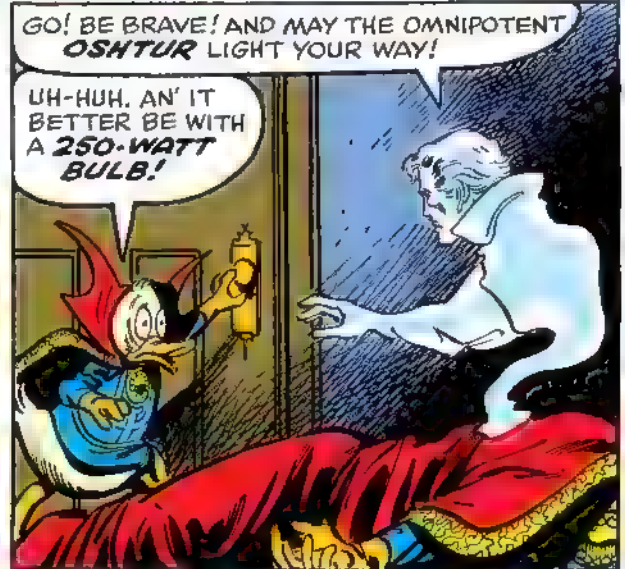
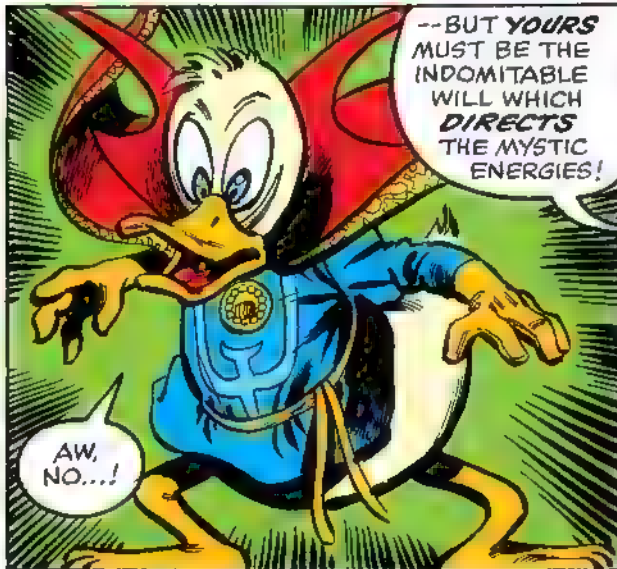
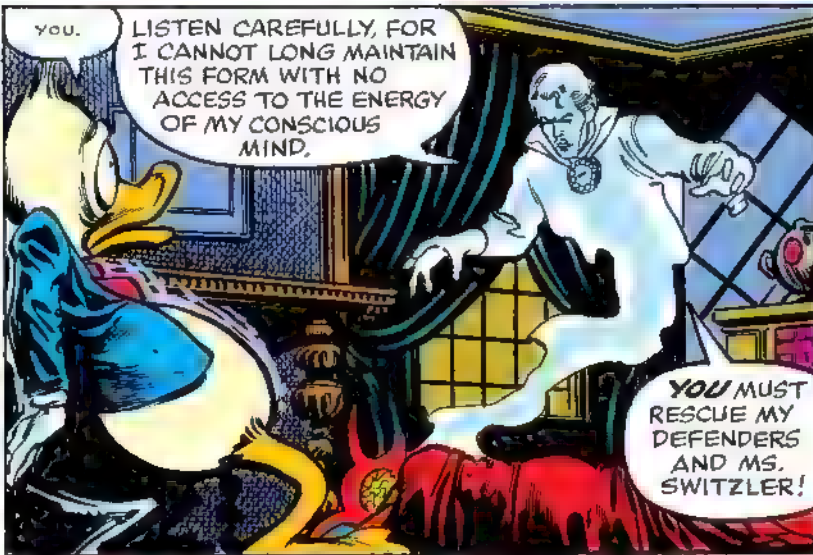
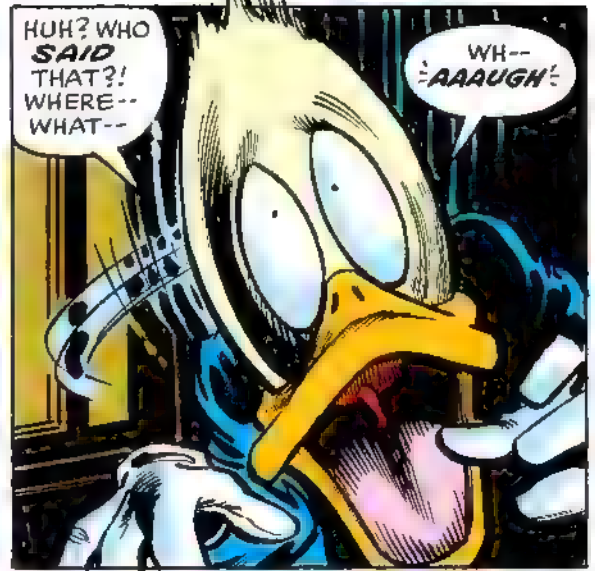
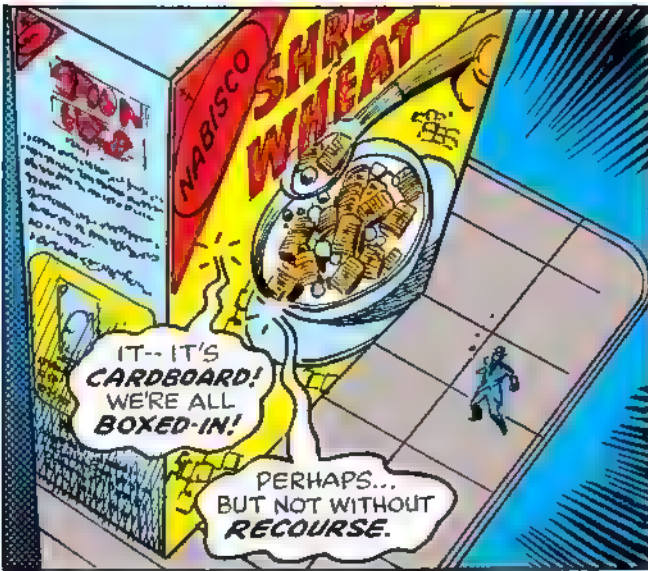
IN ITS INFINITE LUCID DEPTHS, WE SHALL LOCATE YOUR DIMENSIONAL WORLD...

...AND THEN, BY THE POWER OF THE ETERNAL VISHANTI...

ULP! SKIP THE SPOOKY DETAILS? PLEASE?









AND SO, ONE MORE
TIME, I GO RACING
HEAD-ON INTO THE
SLOBBERING **ORIFICE**
OF DEATH--
--LIKE THE **FOOL**
I AM.

YOU'VE NO TIME
FOR **SELF-REPROACH**,
DUCK.

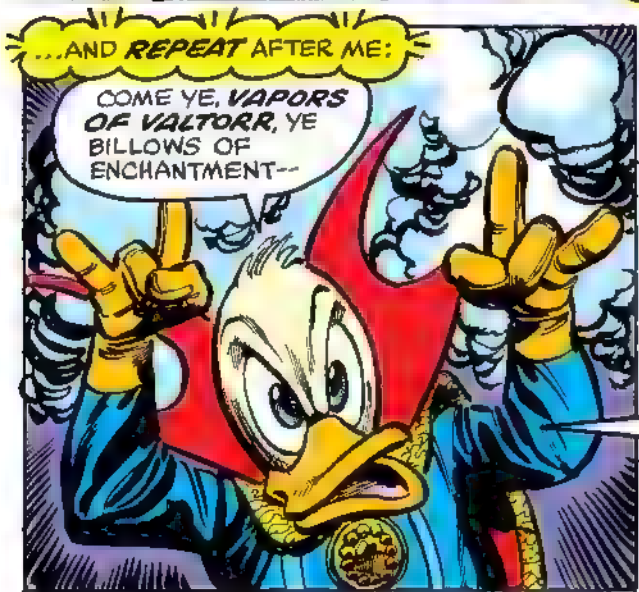
HUH?! WHO
THOUGHT
THAT?

I--DOCTOR
STRANGE,
THIS IS
TELEPATHY,
HOWARD.



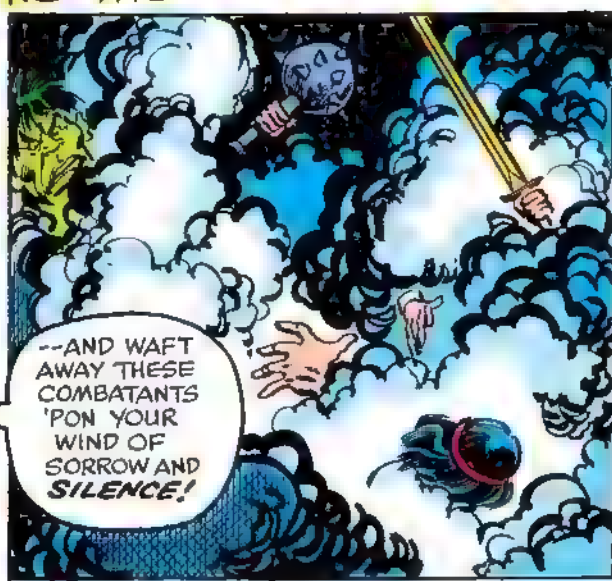
NO
KIDDIN'?
IT'S--
UH-OH.

EMULATE THE
PICTURE I'M PRO-
JECTING BEFORE
YOUR **MIND'S EYE**...

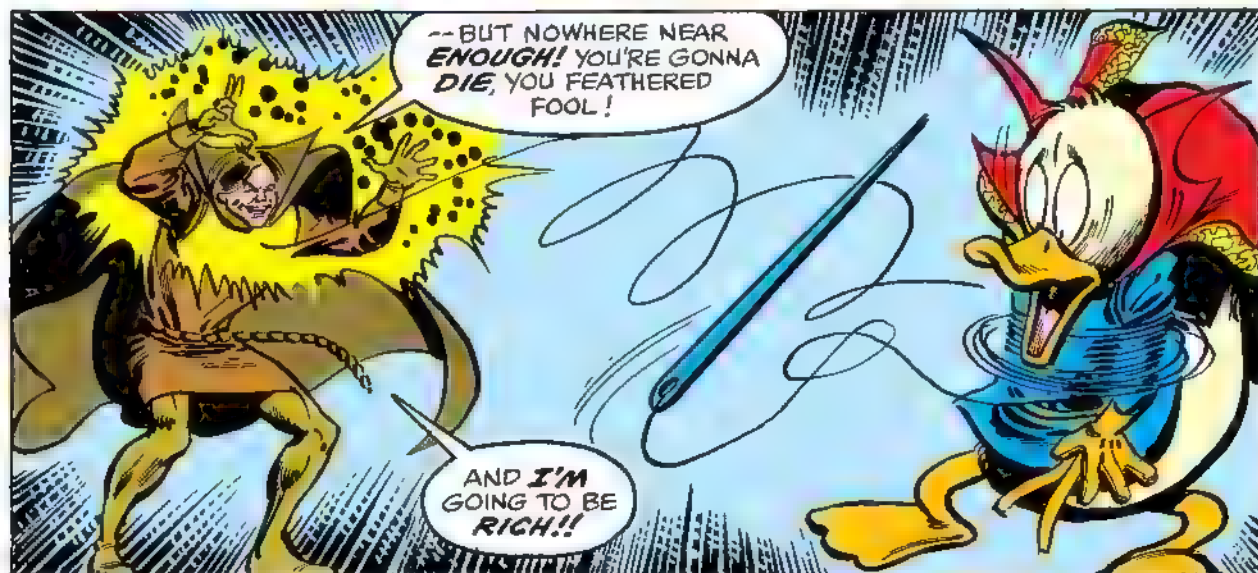
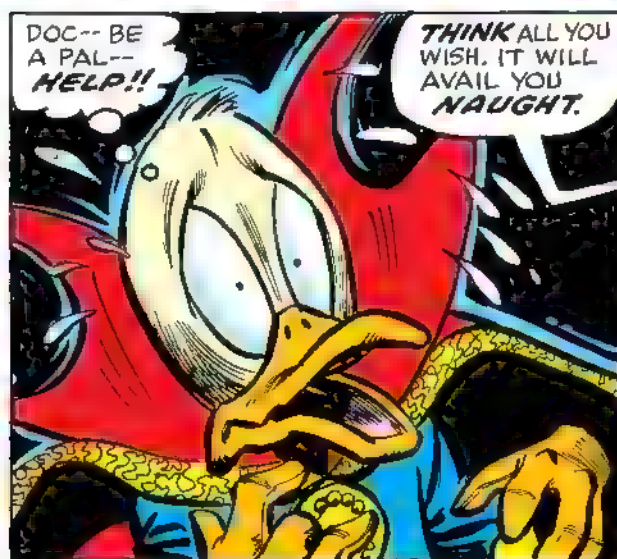
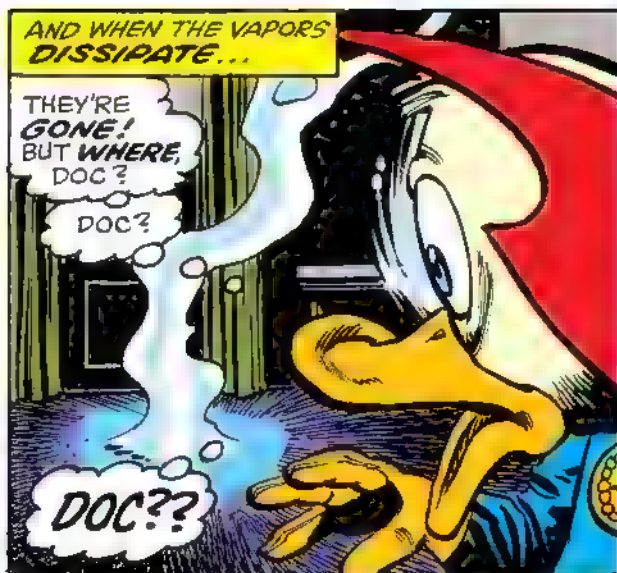


...AND **REPEAT** AFTER ME:

COME YE, **VAPORS**
OF **VALTORR**, YE
BILLOWS OF
ENCHANTMENT--



--AND **WAPT**
AWAY THESE
COMBATANTS
'PON YOUR
WIND OF
SORROW AND
SILENCE!



MEANWHILE, IN SHEA STADIUM, THE CROWD ROARS ITS DISAPPROVAL AS THE HOME TEAM **EVACUATES** THE FIELD TO MAKE ROOM FOR-- THE HEROES AND VILLAINS.

WHAK WHAK WHAK

OW! OW! OW!!

THUK

SPONG

DOC MUST'VE ARRANGED THIS-- TO GIVE US SOME ELBOW, KNEE, AND **FIST** ROOM.

AND SINCE I'D **HATE** TO SEE HIS SPELL GO TO **WASTE**--

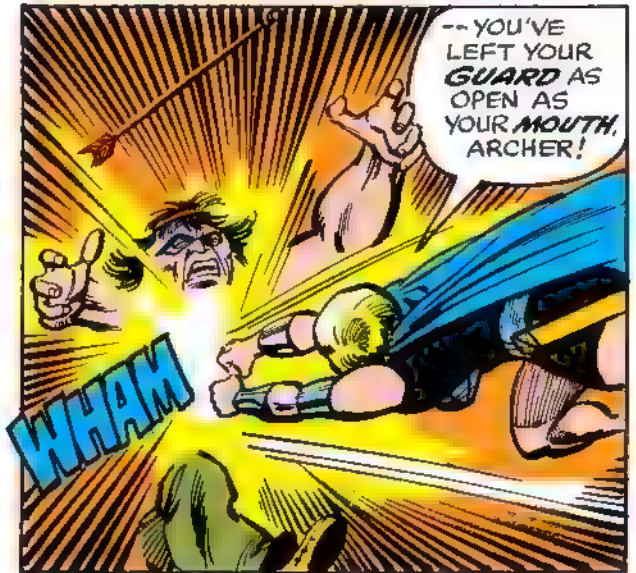
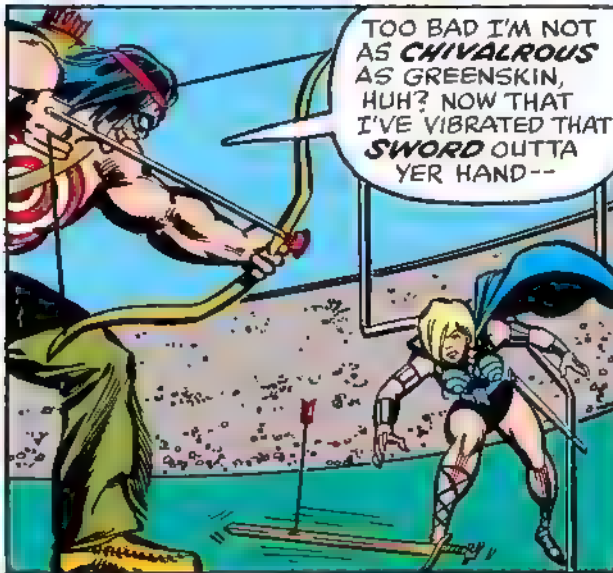
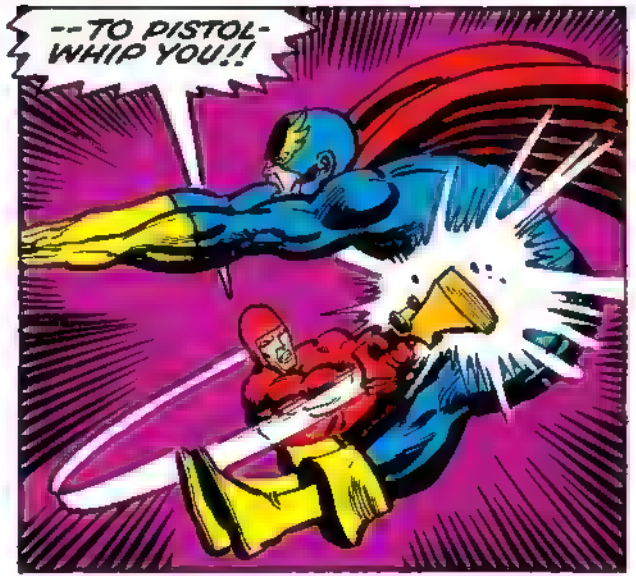
--LET'S SEE IF I CAN

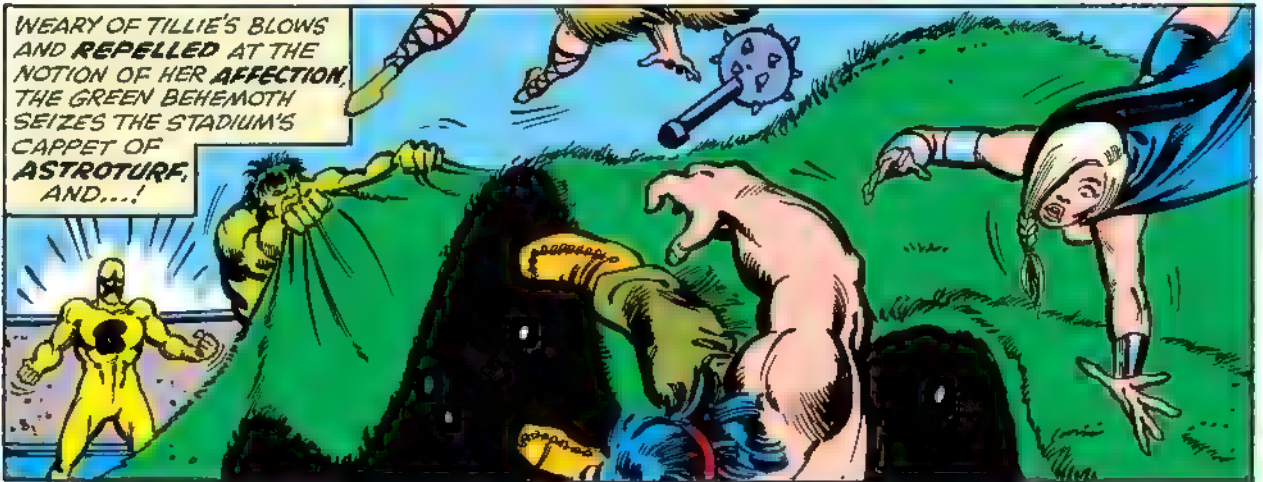
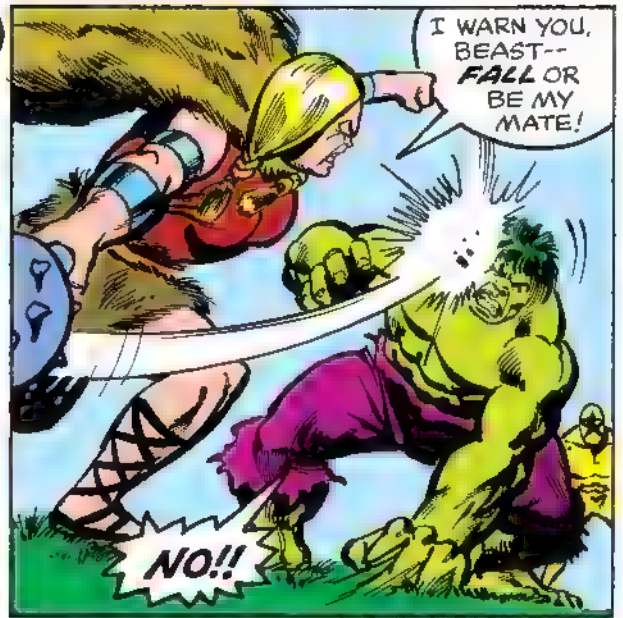
HEY! STOP WRIGGLING! YOU'LL --

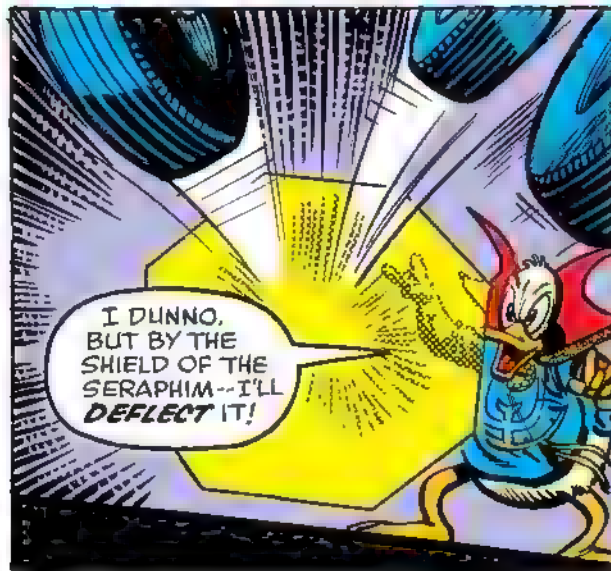
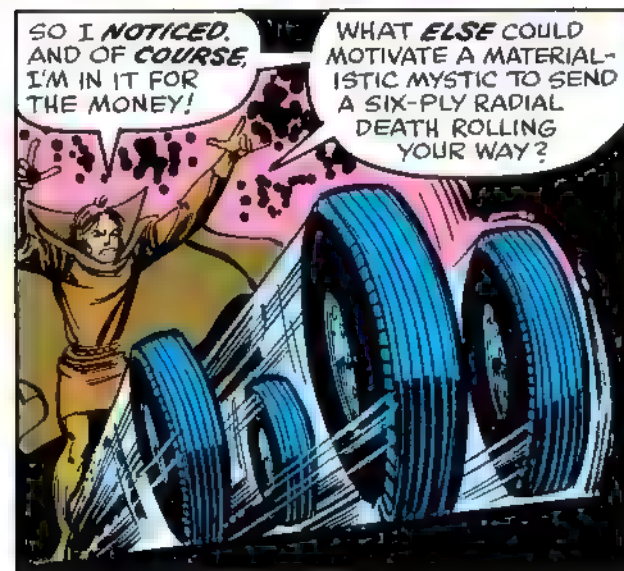
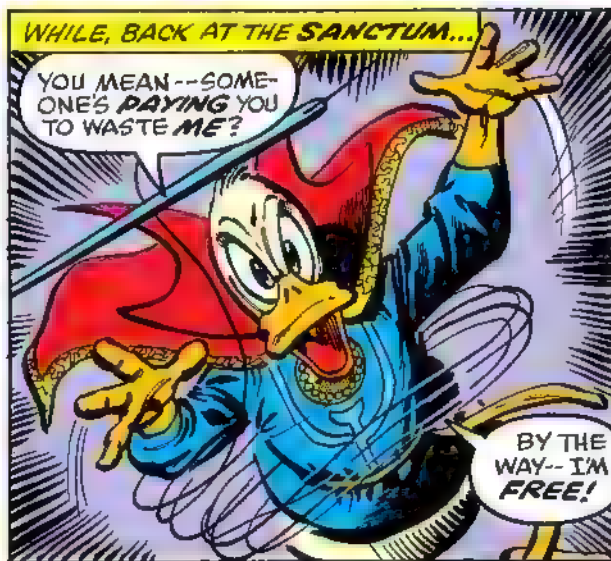
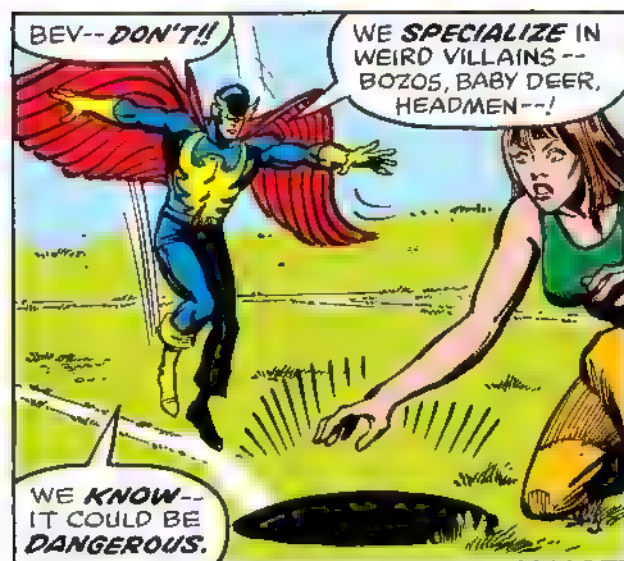
--FALL, NIGHT-HAWK?

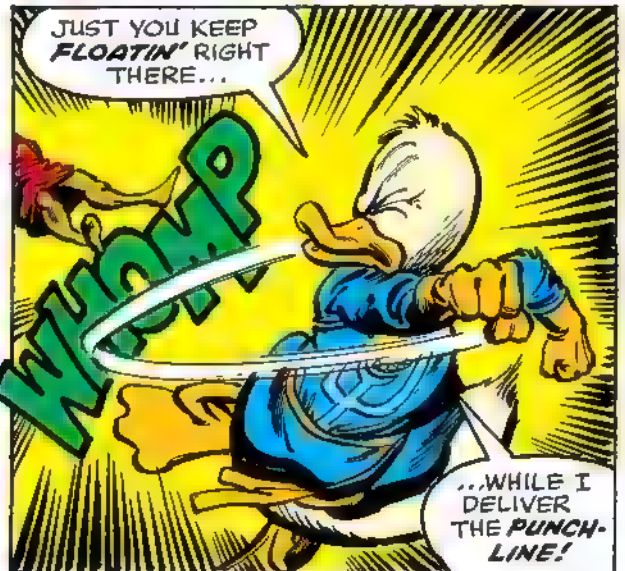
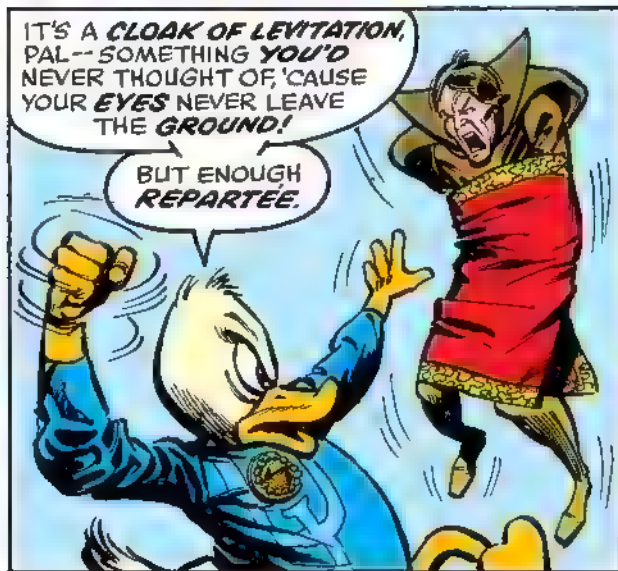
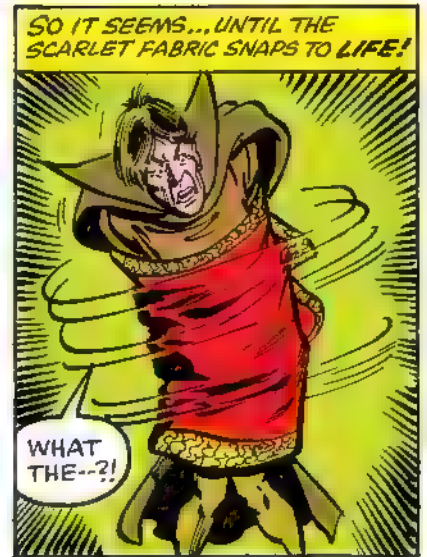
BUT THAT'S PRECISELY WHAT I WANT!

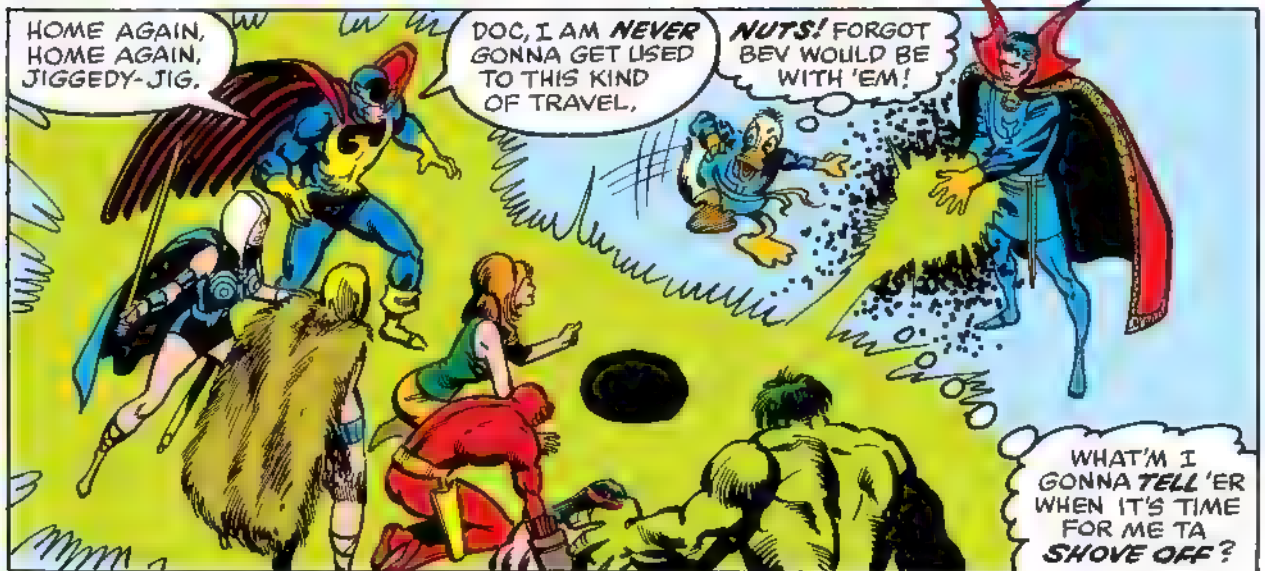
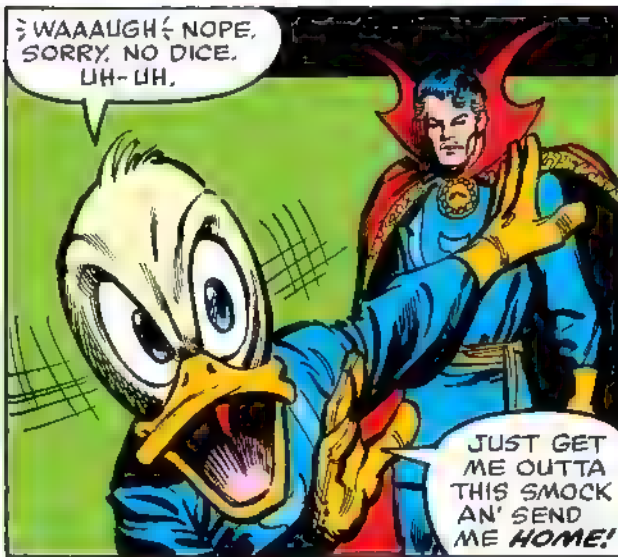
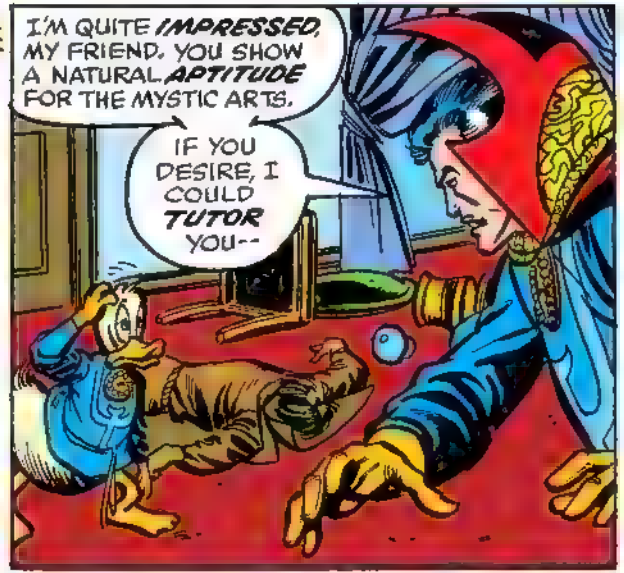
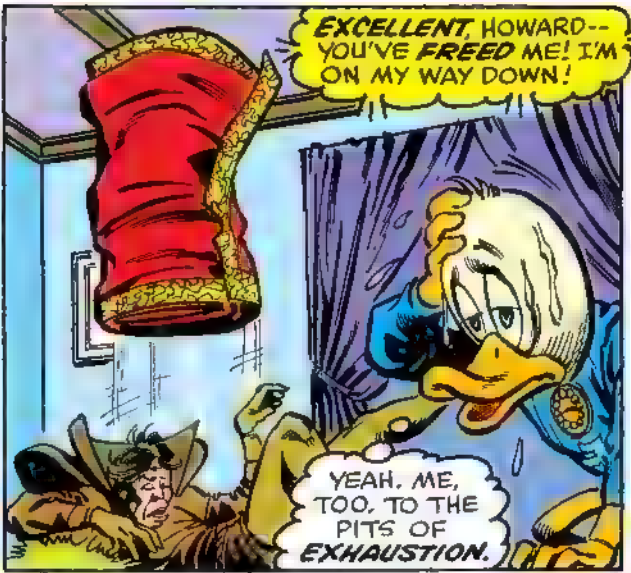
I'M FREE NOW-- TO EMPLOY MY WEAPONRY!

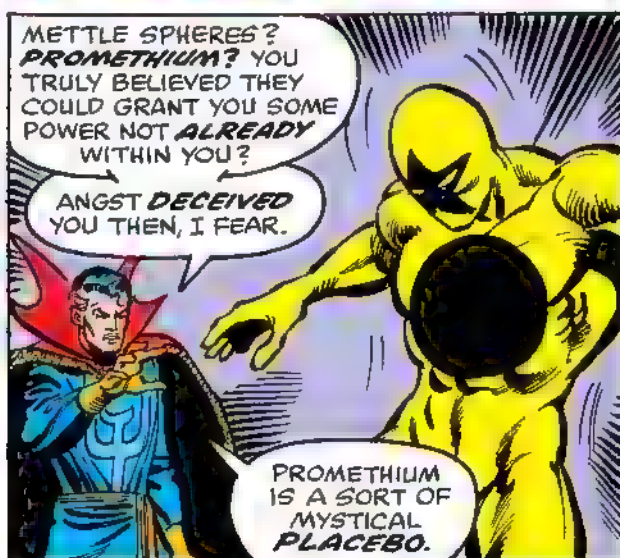
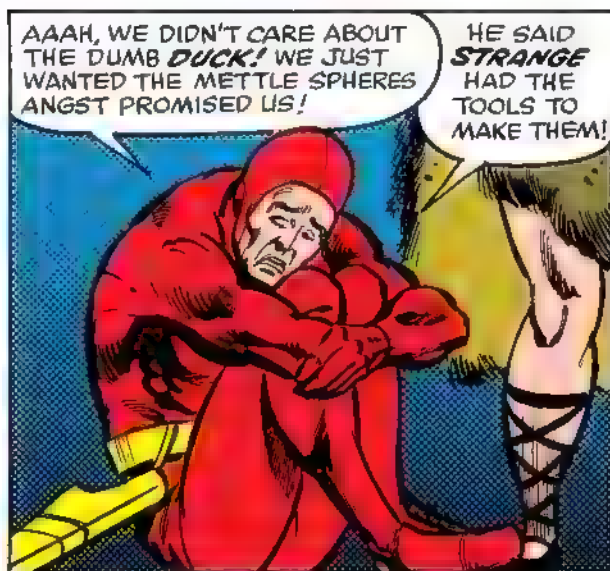
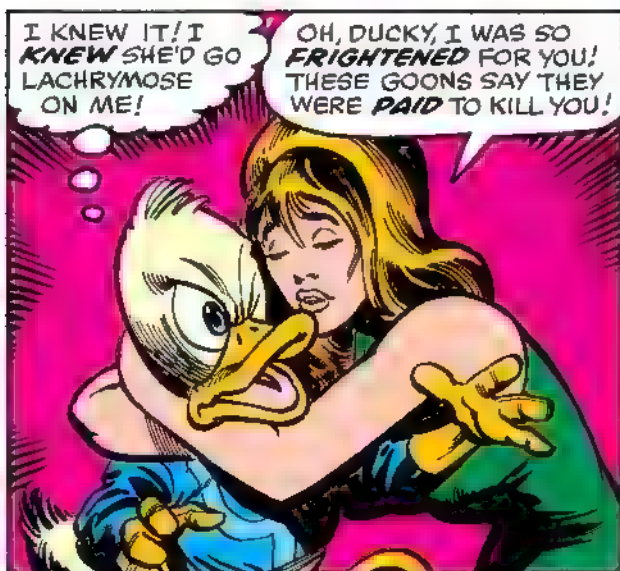












HOWARD
THE DUCK

MARVEL COMICS GROUP

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

30¢ 8
JAN
02415

TRAPPED IN A WORLD HE NEVER MADE!

HOWARD THE DUCK



DAILY NEWS
THE PICTURE NEWSPAPER
August 21, 1976

WEATHER Mostly sunny breezy warm

★★★★
FINAL

Vol 51, No 49

HOWARD FOR PRES

HOWARD IN '76
GET DOWN AMERICA!



House Press Secretar
Baker's keynote see
right was "a good stron
good presentatio

Carter Yells Fowl



"Do leader
next whom
ago" the
the com
and may not know
where he intends to sleep
ship of state?"

Then, just before Comm
speech the appearance of
lady Betty Ford, daughter S
and son Steve in the VIP se
touched off a 10 minute de
stration, with Ford and Rea
forcing waving banners and s
ing slogans at each other f
ing Reagan's speech the chan
Reagan, Reagan Rea-gan
again boomed from the galle
a to another ship. Any match
under way

Even before the climactic rule
fight, the delegates showed the
ready for a nation for an

Assassination Attempt Defended By Gunman



"Thought He Was In Season,"
Explains Prisoner

at and that's financed by the federal 1 chan Mass
the P... and Rockefeller Po-nas
and lower fares

From the time of his hatching, he was... different. A potentially brilliant scholar who dreaded the structured environment of school, he educated himself in the streets, taking whatever work was available, formulating his philosophy of self from what he learned of the world about him. And then the Cosmic Axes shifted... and that world *changed*. Suddenly, he was stranded in a universe he could not fathom. Without warning, he became a strange fowl in an even stranger land.

Stan Lee PRESENTS: **HOWARD THE DUCK!**™

STEVE GERBER * GENE COLAN * STEVE LEIALOHA * I. WATANABE * JAN COHEN * ARCHIE GOODWIN
WRITER * ARTIST * INKER * LETTERER * COLORIST * EDITOR

OPEN SEASON!

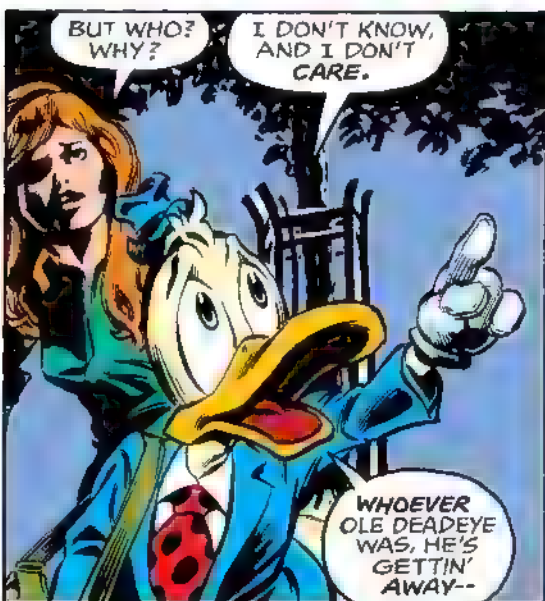


A HANDSHAKE, A TIP OF THE HAT, AND HOWARD THE DUCK BIDS FAREWELL TO DR. STRANGE * AND TO INNOCENCE--AS HE WADDLES BLINDLY INTO THE WORLD OF HARSH POLITICAL REALITY.

IT'S A REALITY CIRCUMSCRIBED BY THE VIEW THROUGH A TELESCOPIC SIGHT, AN EXISTENCE LED AT THE INTERSECTION OF CROSSHAIRS.

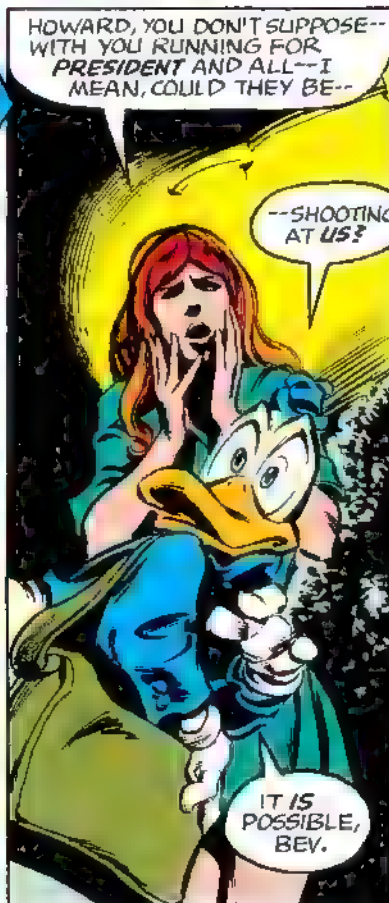
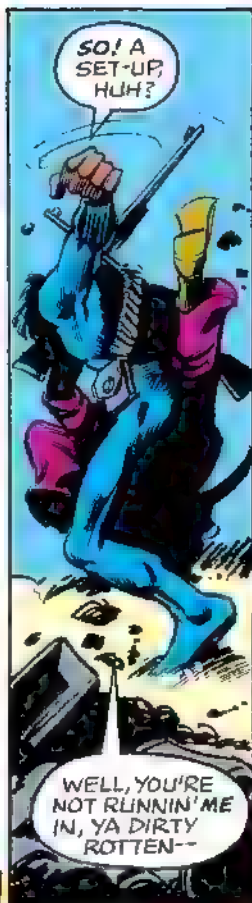
FOR, ALONG WITH POWER, RICHES, FAME, AND FREE FRANKING PRIVILEGES--THE MAN OR FOWL WHO SEEKS THE WHITE HOUSE ALSO COURTS DEATH. (SO WHAT ELSE IS NEW?)

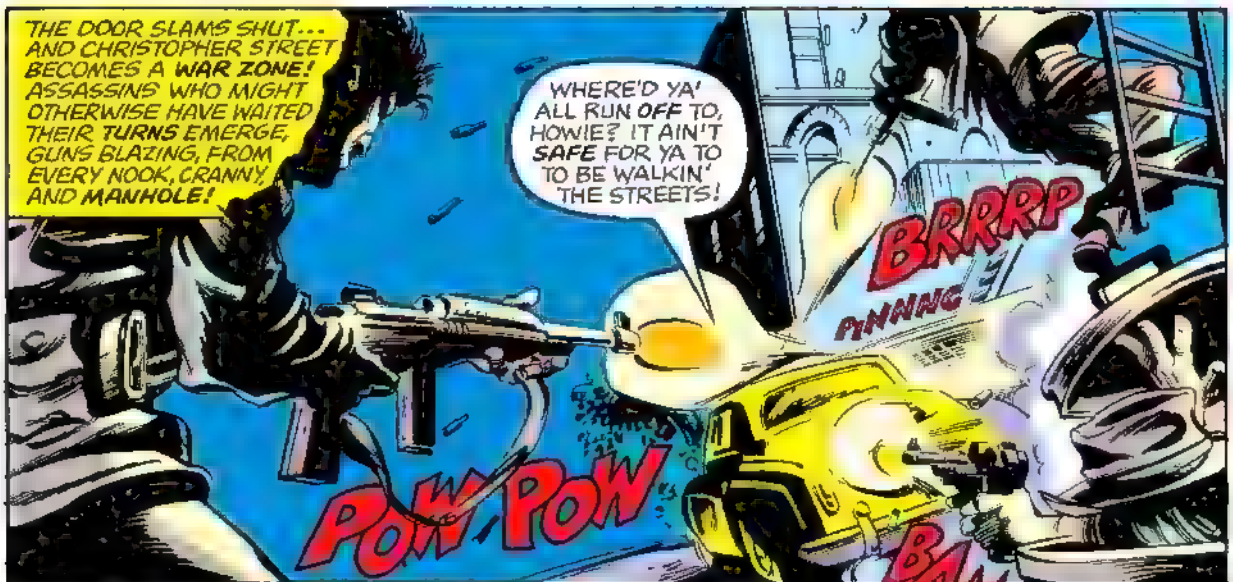
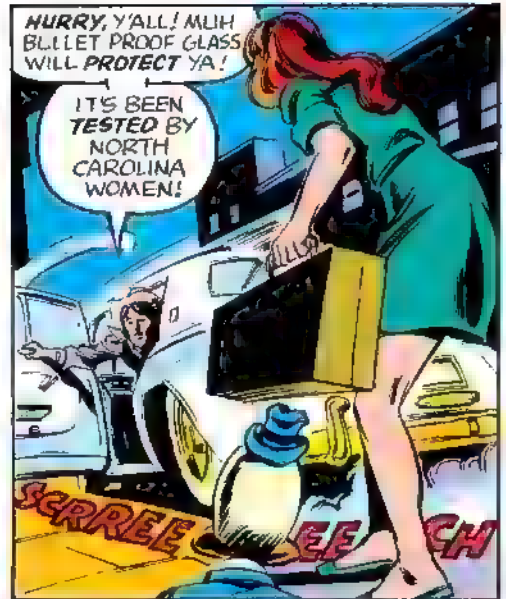
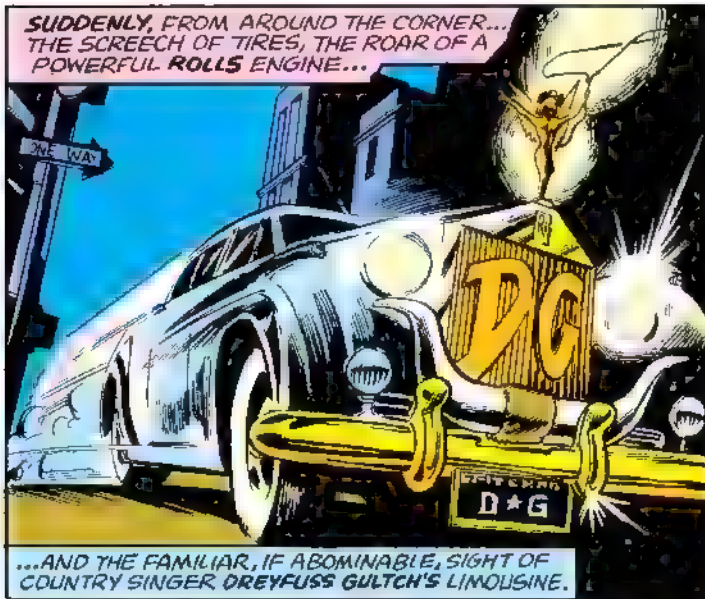
* THEY MET IN THE HTD TREASURY EDITION. --ARCH.

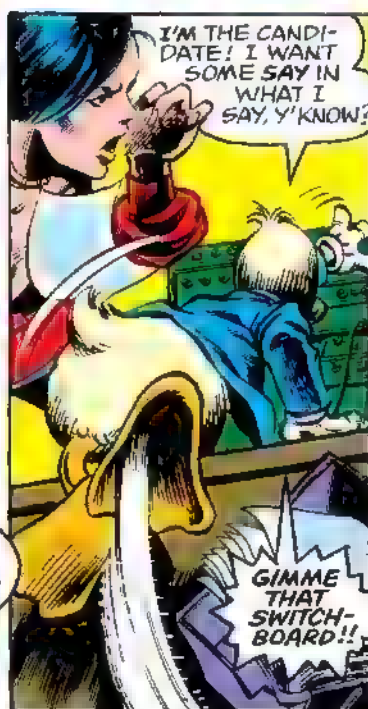
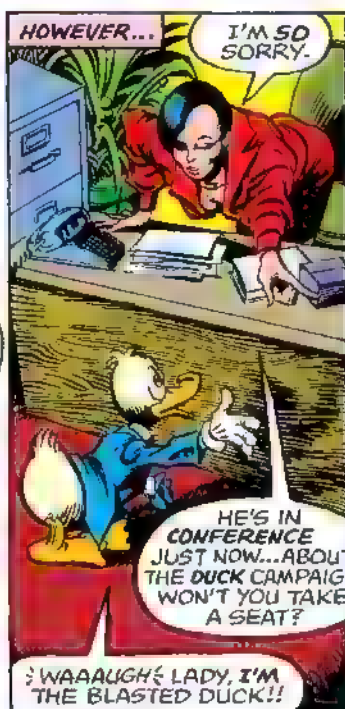


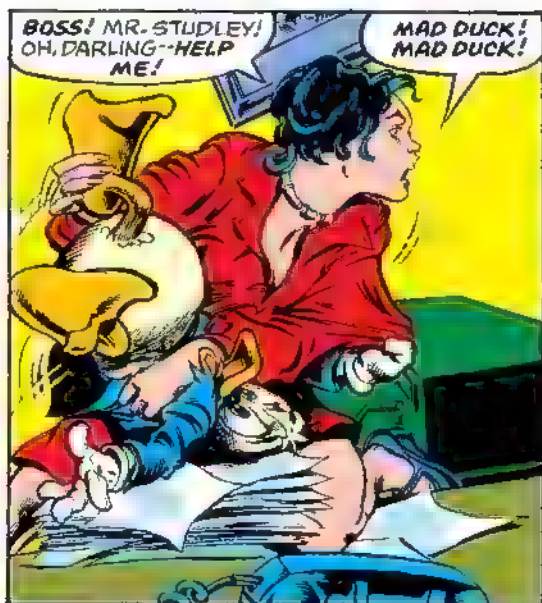


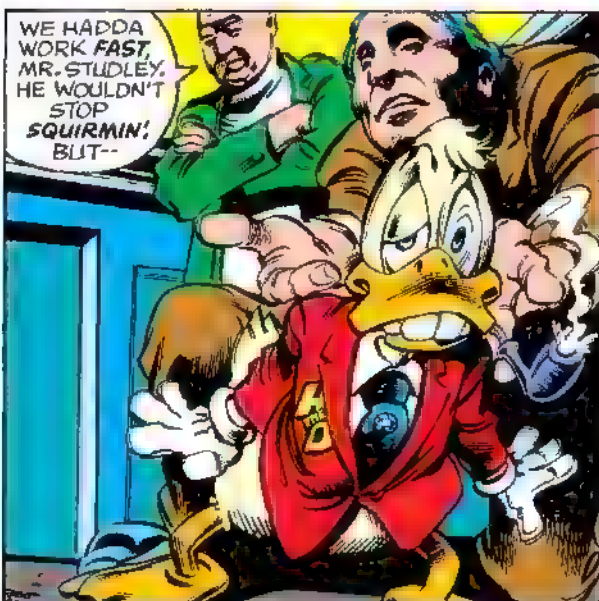
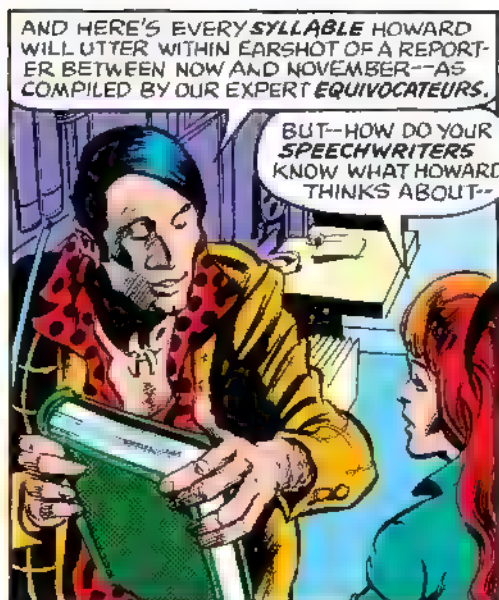
ANOTHER HUMAN AMMUNITION DEPOT.

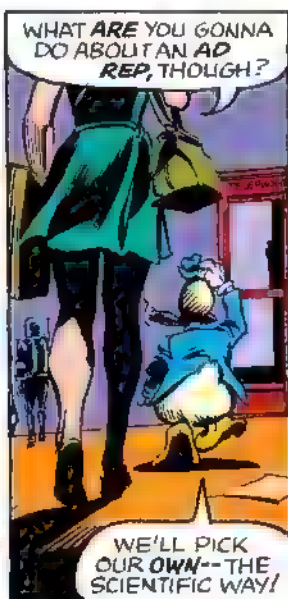
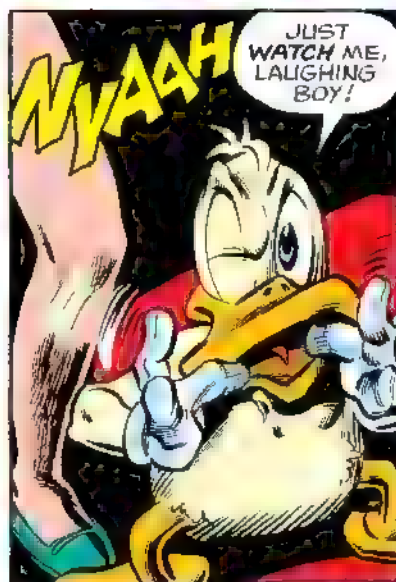
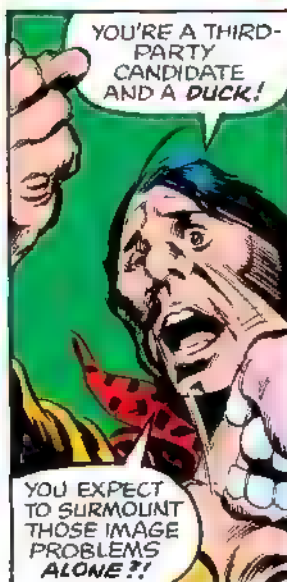
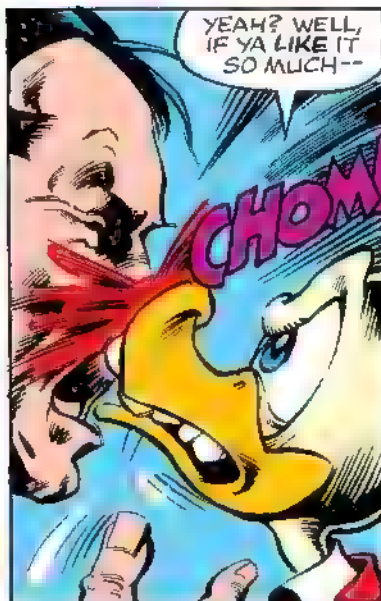






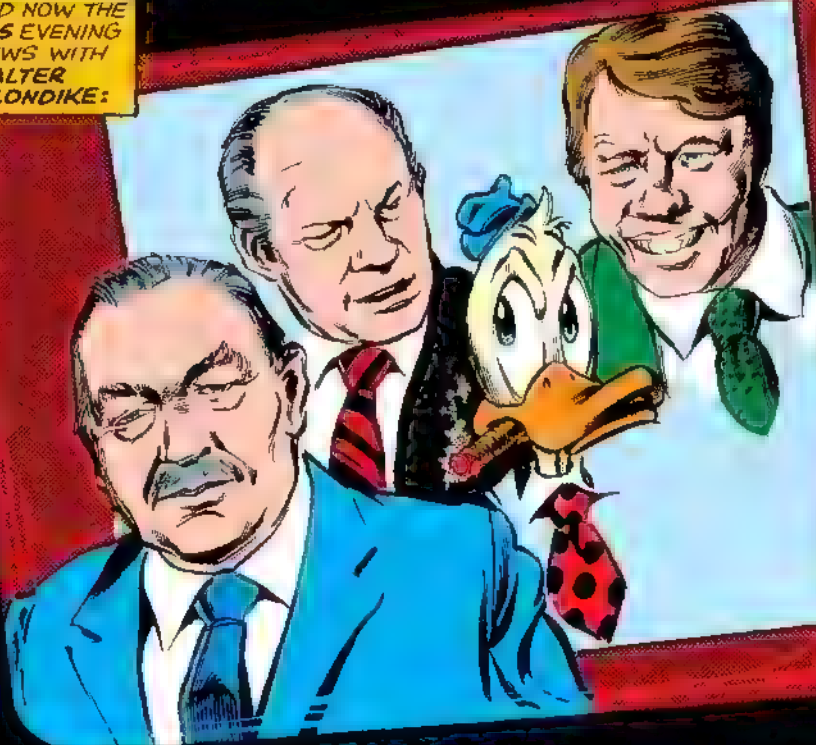






CAMPAIGN LOG: SEPTEMBER

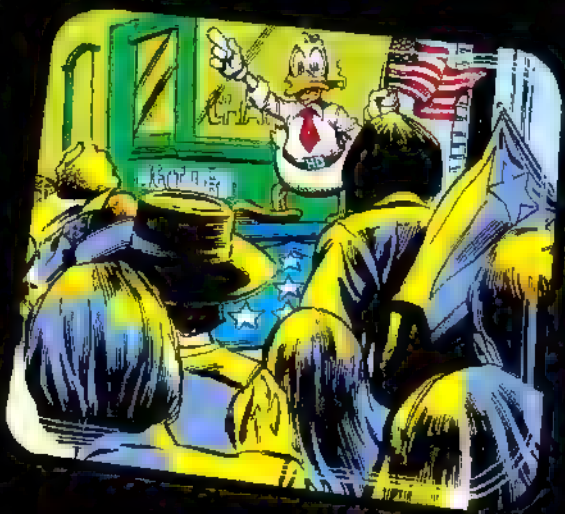
AND NOW THE
QBS EVENING
NEWS WITH
WALTER
KLONDIKE:



"GOOD MORNING.
ONE MONTH AGO,
MOST AMERICANS
HAD NEVER HEARD
OF MAD GENIUS
ASSOCIATES--OR
THEIR MOST UN-
USUAL CLIENT.
BUT FOR THE
PAST THIRTY
DAYS...



"...THE ATTENTION OF THE
ELECTORATE HAS BEEN
RIVETED ON THAT DIMINUTIVE
FIGURE, PERHAPS THE MOST
EXTRAORDINARY NEW FACE
IN POLITICS.



"HIS CAMPAIGN BEGAN IN-
AUSPICIOUSLY ENOUGH--JUST
A SOAPBOX AND PLAIN TALK.
YET HIS DEMEANOR, HIS RAW,
THROATY VOICE, HIS RELENTLESS
CANDOR SET HIM APART
AT ONCE.



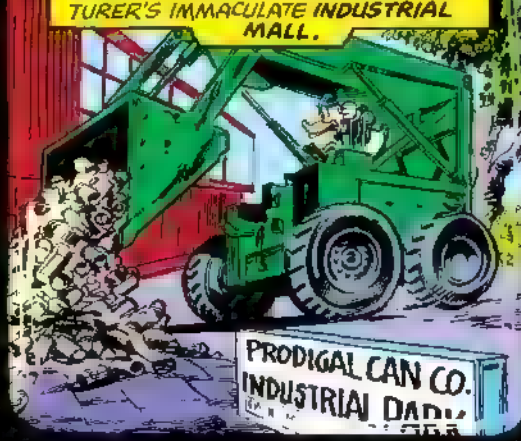
"IN THE WORDS OF ONE
ASTONISHED LISTENER: 'MY
GOD, HE'S TELLING THE TRUTH!
HE'LL BE DEAD IN A WEEK!'

"WHY A DUCK?"
YOU ASK! I SAY,
WHY NOT A
DUCK? YOU'VE
HAD TURKEYS
RUNNING THIS
COUNTRY FOR
200 YEARS!

I'M GONNA RUN
AN ACTIVIST
CAMPAIGN! EVEN
THE BOZOS WHO
JUST LOOK AT THE
PICTURES WILL
KNOW WHAT
I STAND FOR!

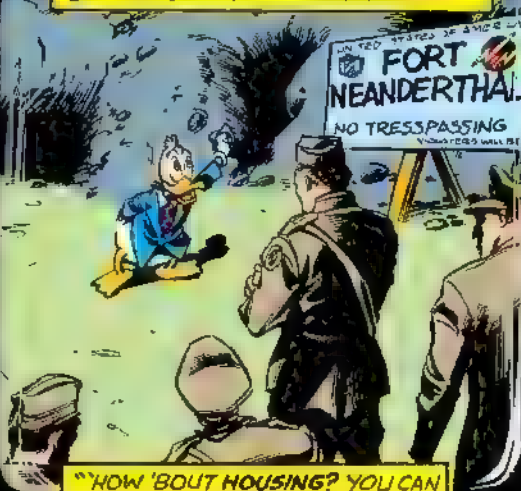
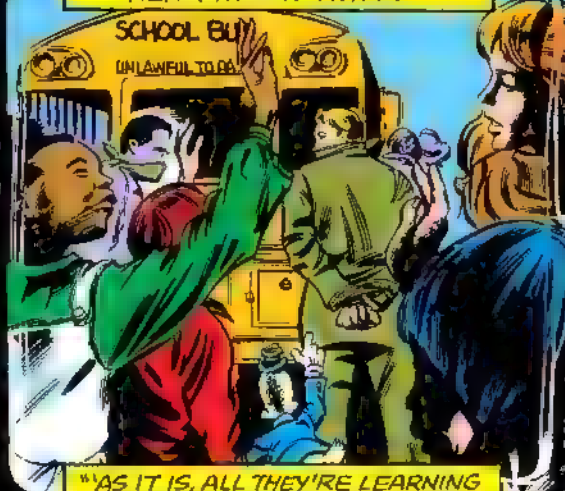
"TO THE SURPRISE OF A JADED
CITIZENRY, THIS CURIOUS LITTLE
CREATURE KEPT HIS PROMISE--
BEGINNING WITH A VISUAL
STATEMENT ON POLLUTION.

"FROM ONE SQUARE BLOCK IN NEW
YORK, HTD COLLECTED A STEAM-
SHOVELFUL OF NON-RETURNABLE
CONTAINERS--AND BROUGHT THEM
HOME TO ROOST ON THE MANUFAC-
TURER'S IMMACULATE INDUSTRIAL
MALL.



"ON BUSING: 'SEND THE PARENTS
FOR A RIDE! IF THEY STOPPED
YELLING, MAYBE THE KIDS COULD
HEAR THEIR TEACHERS!'

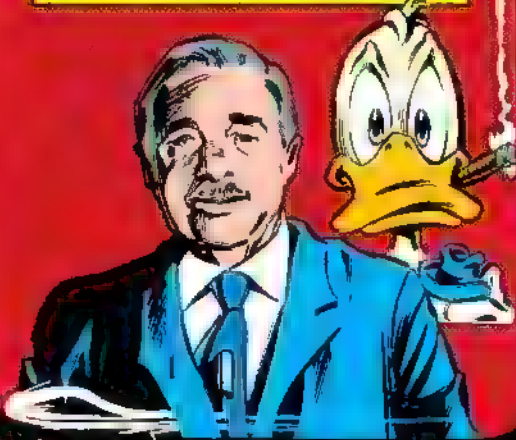
"ON THE MILITARY BUDGET: 'YOU
GUYS WANT BIGGER, DEADLIER,
MORE EXPENSIVE WEAPONS? SWELL!
BUT WE GOTTA CUT SOMETHING!'



"AS IT IS, ALL THEY'RE LEARNING
IS ARSON AND BAD MANNERS!

"HOW 'BOUT HOUSING? YOU CAN
ROUGH IT--IN CAVES. IT'LL SUIT
YOUR TEMPERAMENT!"

"NONE OF THOSE POSITIONS PROVED POPULAR, HOWEVER, WITH VARIOUS POWERFUL INTEREST GROUPS--OR WITH THE DUCK'S OPPONENTS."



OUR FOWL MAY FIND THAT EVEN FORTH-RIGHTNESS, CARRIED TO ITS **EXTREME**, MAY BE DELETERIOUS IN THE LONG VIEW.

MAYBE NOT, THOUGH.

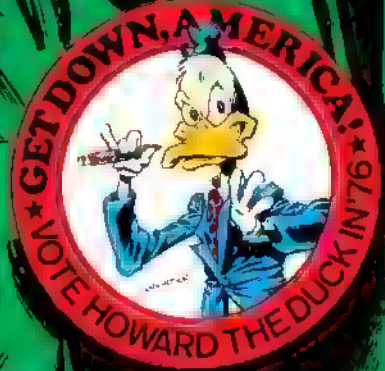


I, UH, AM NOT QUITE CERTAIN HOW TO INTERPRET OR RESPOND TO THIS DUCK'S THEATRICS. BUT IF IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE **FUNNY**, I DON'T GET THE JOKE.

IS IT DIRTY, OR WHAT?



*BUT MILLIONS OF AMERICANS DO UNDERSTAND AND HAVE RESPONDED, AND THEY'RE WEARING THIS NOW-FAMOUS **BUTTON** TO PROVE IT.

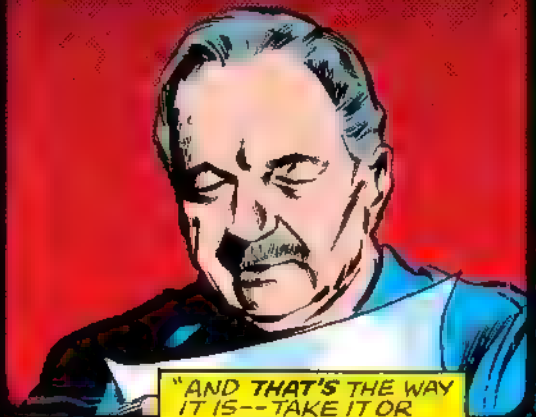


"NOW THE WORLD WONDERS--CAN HE WIN? WILL HE LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO WIN?"



"BY THE SIMPLE ACT OF TELLING THE TRUTH AS HE SEES IT, HOWARD THE DUCK HAS MANAGED TO **ANTAGONIZE** ALMOST EVERYBODY."

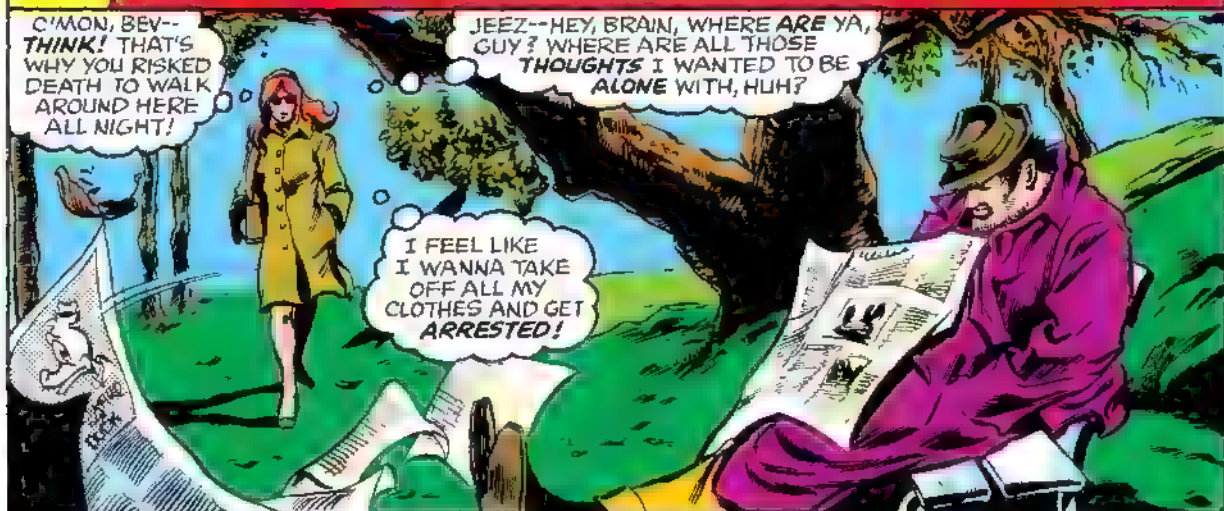
"ACCORDING TO THE POLLS, SOME 48% OF THE POPULATION WANT HIM **DEAD**--30% INTEND TO GIVE HIM THEIR **VOTE**--AND 22% ARE **UNDECIDED**."



"AND **THAT'S** THE WAY IT IS--TAKE IT OR **LEAVE IT**."

INTER-
LUDE

A CHILL OCTOBER MORN IN CENTRAL PARK!



CAMPAIGN LOG: NOVEMBER

"THAT'S WHY WE ASKED FOR
THIS MEETING AT MR.
GULTCH'S RANCH.

"AS YOU
KNOW WE
REPRESENT
SOME VERY
POWERFUL
INTERESTS
IN THIS
COUNTRY.

"AND WE WANT YOU TO KNOW, MR. DUCK, WE'RE BEHIND YOU A THOUSAND PER CENT."

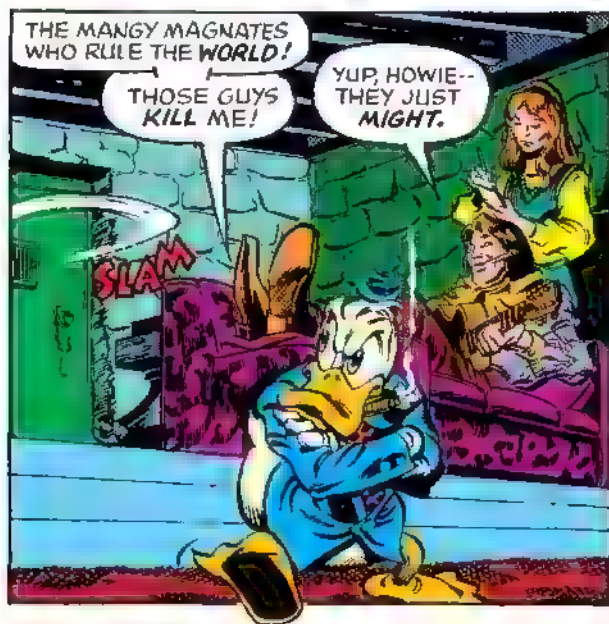
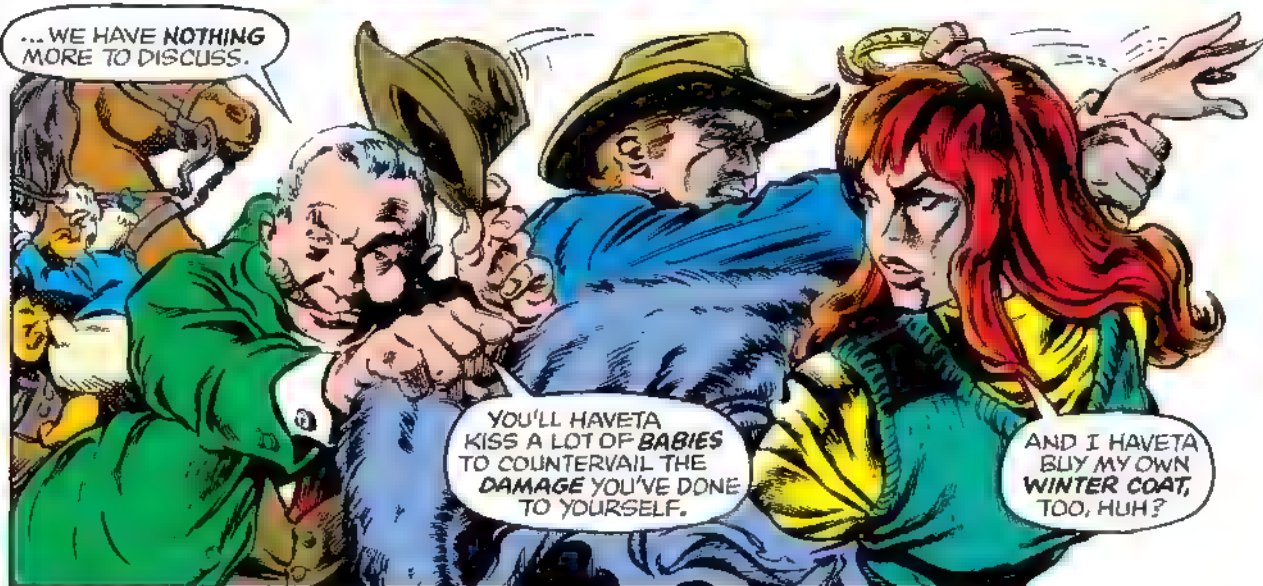
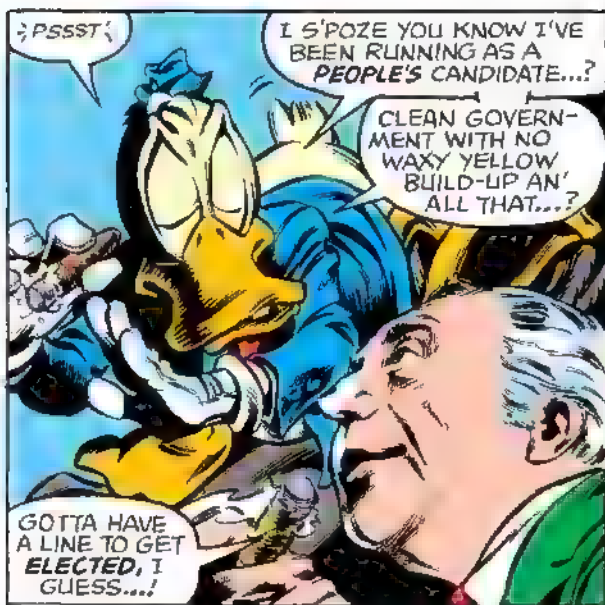
IS THIS REALLY
MINK-?

WE CAN MAKE
MAKE IT, EH--WORTH
YOUR **WHILE** TO BE
SUPPORTIVE OF
US, TOO.

IN OTHER
WORDS, YOU
YO-YO'S
WANNA DO
BUSINESS.

I VETO A
BILL--THEN
BILL YOU FOR
A COUPLE
HUNDRED
GRAND,
RIGHT?

WELL OF COURSE, THERE'S NO NEED TO TALK FIGURES JUST YET...!



PARTIAL TRANSCRIPT OF NATIONALLY TELEVIEWED PRESS CONFERENCE:
Hotel Rykrisp, New York City, November 1, 1976

HOWARD: Ladies an' germs, I'll keep my opening smart remarks brief. I didn't particularly wanna be president of this coast to coast funny farm you hairless apes have set up. When they asked me to run, I'd just been hit on the head an' didn't really understand what I was agreein' to. But I've reached the conclusion that most o' the American public is in the same condition most o' the time, so just maybe I'm the ideal candidate. You meatbrains willingly subject yourselves to more abuse, physical and psychologica, than any nation in history! You allow your eyes and lungs to be eaten away by pollution. You fill your digestive tracts with chemicals. Your ears are barraged by the sounds of jackhammer progress. All this while politicians and Madison Avenue bang away at your minds. You all wanna be happy an' secure, yet you open yourselves to the constant tension an' pressure of a society that claims to be free, but refuses to let you make a move without first filing forms in triplicate. You wonder why you got violence? Why your young are either dissident, empty headed, or drugged into a stupor? It's because you've fashioned an emotionally and intellectually sterile culture, that's why! If an individual is unwilling to spend his life in the plodding pursuit of possessions, there's nothing for him to do! The United States is one big dateless Saturday night! If I'm elected, I'm gonna inject a little *life* back into you anesthetized Americans! For four years, this country's gonna get down an' boogie, see? Jinqawal! Okay! Now anybody got any brilliant questions?

(Stunned silence, interrupted only by an occasional nervous cough; then...)

RAMSEY KLEP (Devil's Tongue, N.M., *Daily Lick*): Mr. Duck, which do you favor - conditional amnesty or a blanket pardon for Vietnam draft evaders?

HOWARD: Ne ther I favor educat on

KLEP. Beg pardon?

HOWARD: Look, as nearly as I can tell, everybody is still reacting on this question with his gut, not his head. It's still "my country right or wrong" versus "make love not war". I figure the answer is a debate, on television, between proponents of each position. The government would buy time on all three networks and the yelling could go on for days. Then, the country could decide in a national referendum, based on each individual's judgment of the facts. Revolutionary, huh? Next!

DUNSTAN QUOBROX (Lima, OH., *Daily Bean*): What's your opinion of the recent Washington scandals? Should elected officials be held accountable for their private morality?

HOWARD: Nah. As long as the taxpayers aren't financin' their little romps, senators an' congressmen deserve to have a little fun. Heck, we oughtta be heartened to know some o' those old prunes have still got it in 'em.

SAM QUENTIN (Dubious, NJ, *Daily Dunno*): How do you feel, sir, about violence in movies, television programs, and comic books?

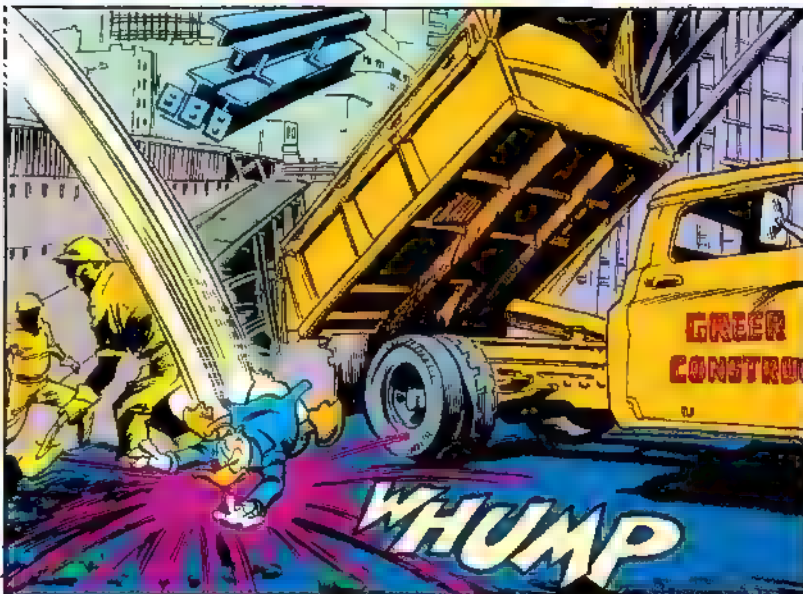
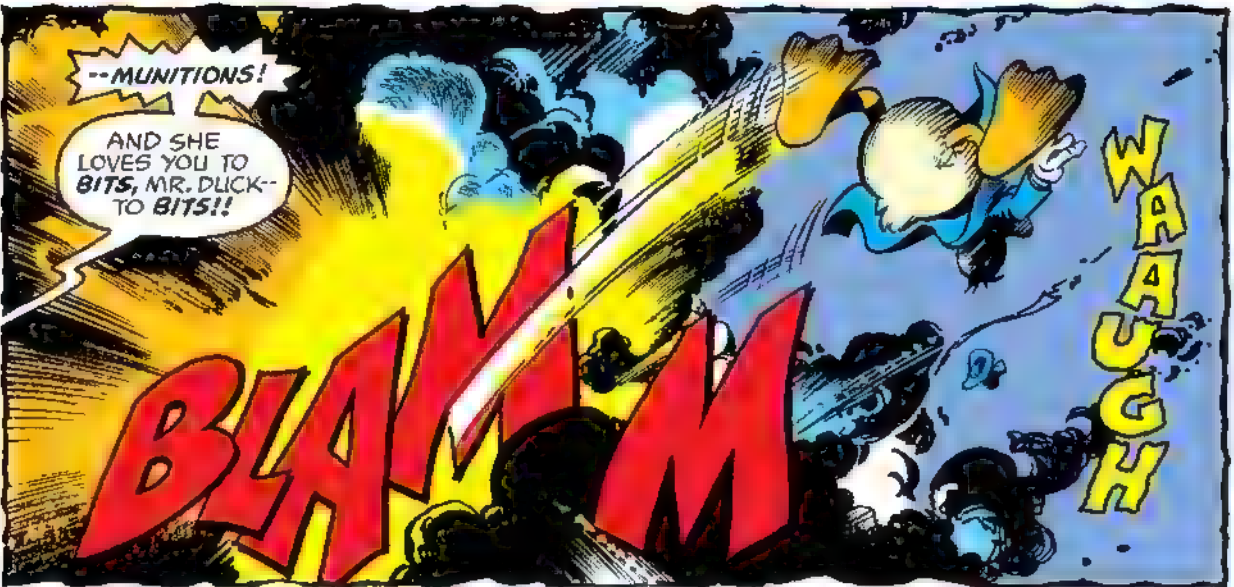
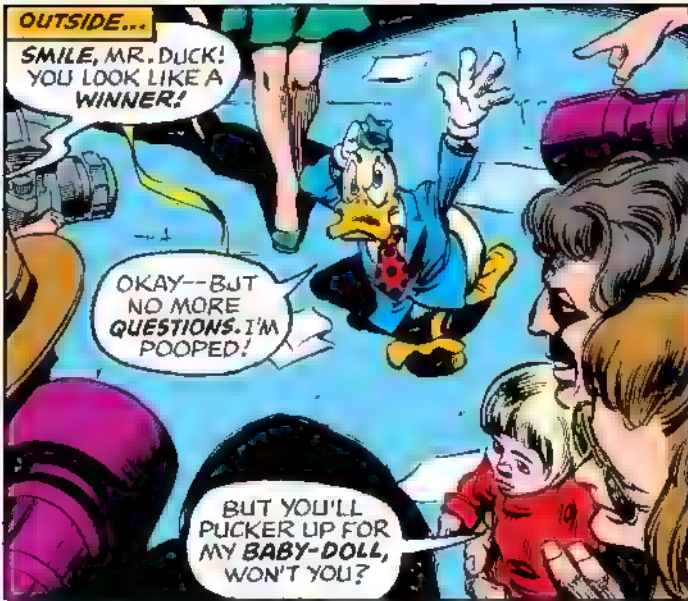
HOWARD: I'm all for it.

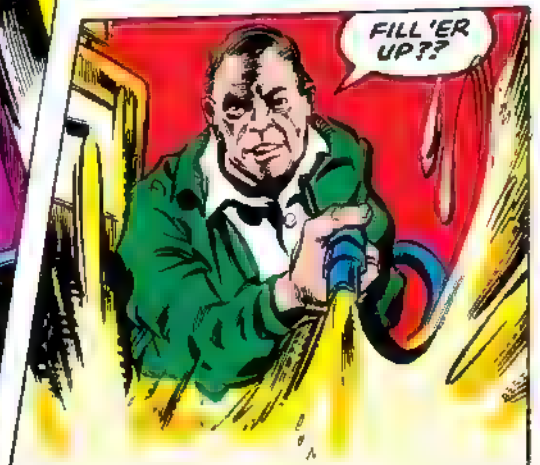
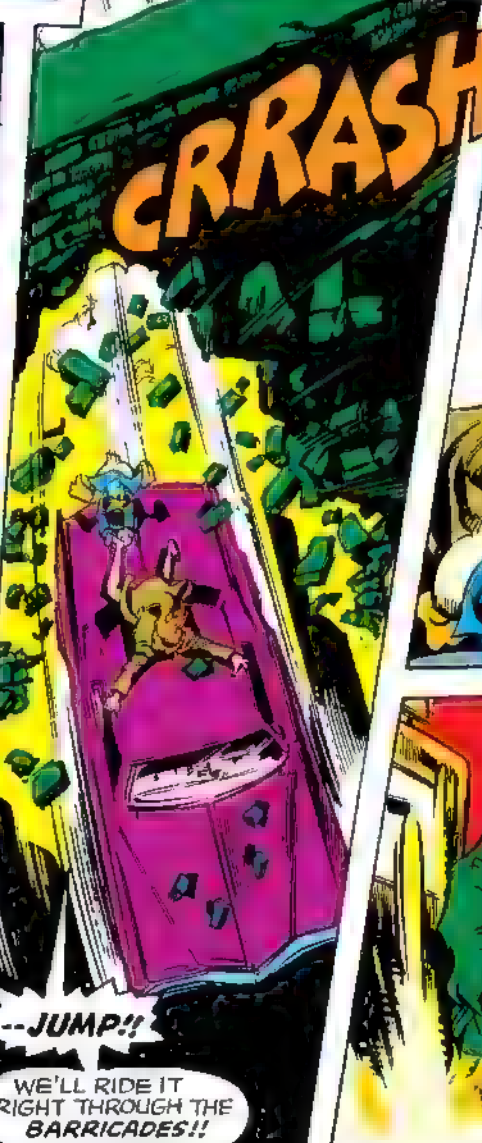
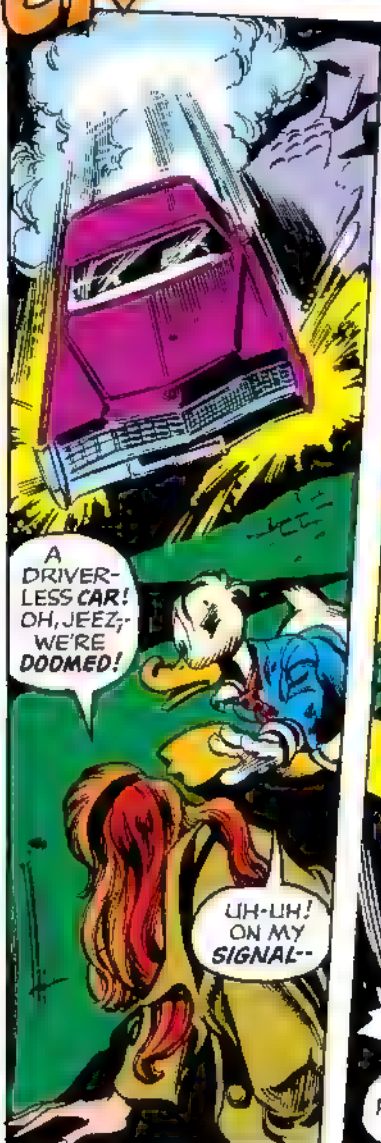
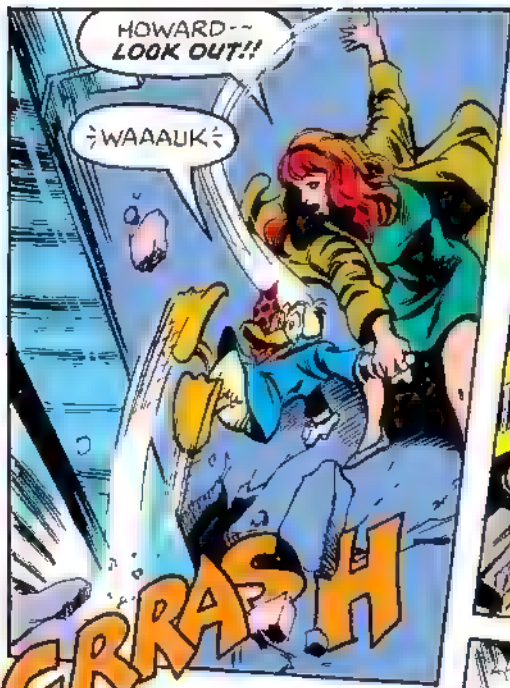
QUENTIN: What?

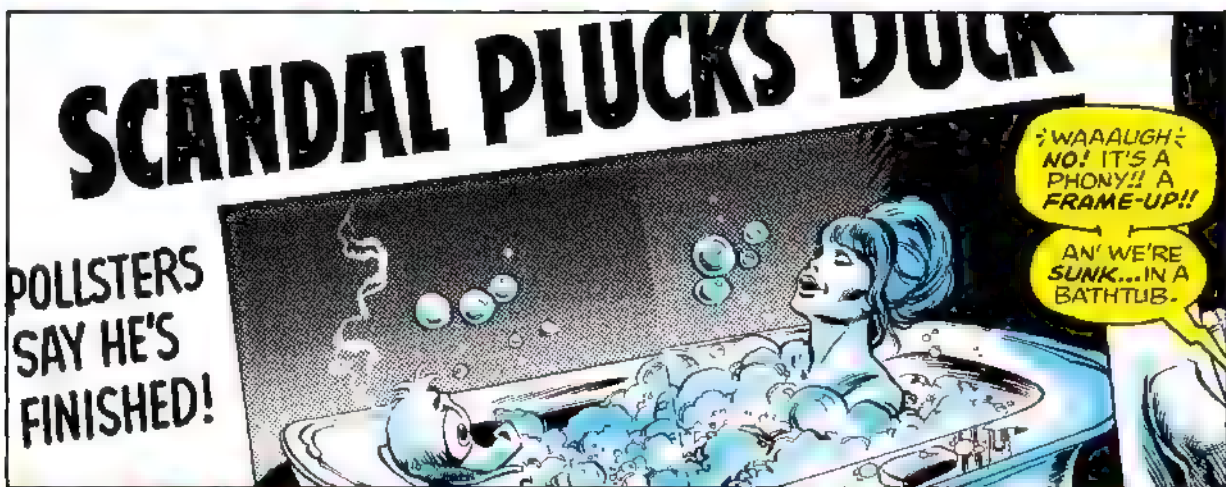
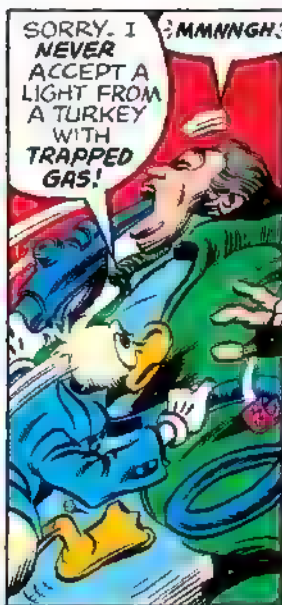
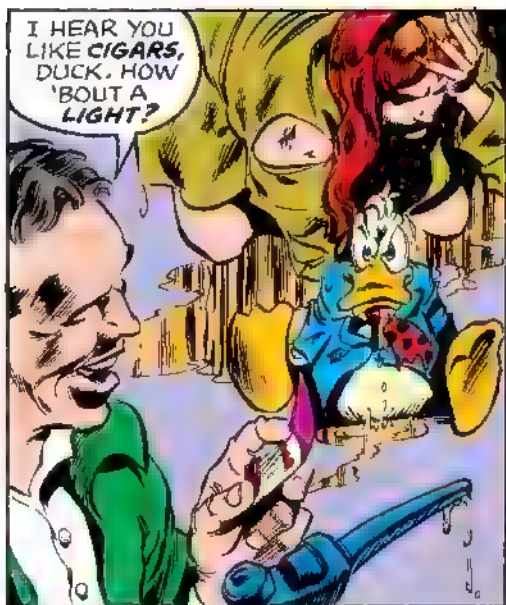
HOWARD: As long as it's never presented as cathartic - as a release, as a solution. A kid oughtta know what he's gettin' into if he's contemplatin' stabbing or shootin' somebody. It's messy. The blood gets all over the floor. It smells bad. It's ugly to look at. I think violence should be presented honestly - as disgustingly and offensively as possible. There's no such thing as tasteful violence.

(Beverly Switzler leaps up on the table, does a little dance, blows a whistle, and chirps "Th th-that's all, folks!" into a microphone. The auditorium explodes in applause, and the press conference concludes.)









NEXT > **THE BITE OF THE BEAVER!** CHOMP!

HOWARD
THE DUCK

MARVEL® COMICS GROUP

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

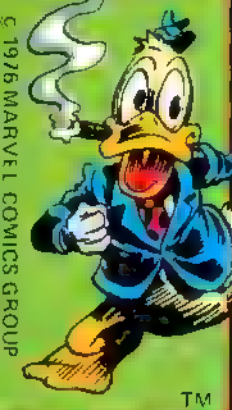
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FEB
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TRAPPED IN A WORLD HE NEVER MADE!

HOWARD THE DUCK



THUNDER OVER NIAGRA FALLS!
WHEN BITES THE
BEAVER!

From the time of his hatching, he was...different. A potent ally brilliant scholar who dreaded the structured environment of school, he educated himself in the streets, taking whatever work was available, formulating his philosophy of self from what he learned of the world about him. And then the Cosmic Axis shifted...and that world *changed*. Suddenly, he was stranded in a universe he could not fathom. Without warning, he became a strange fowl in an even stranger land.

Stan Lee PRESENTS: **HOWARD THE DUCK!**™

STEVE GERBER
WRITER / EDITOR

GENE COLAN
ARTIST

STEVE LEIALOHA
INKER

JOHN COSTANZA, letterer
MICHELE WOLFMAN, colorist

NOVEMBER 3, 1976: THE
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IS
PAST, AND YESTERDAY'S
PAPERS TELL THE TALE--
THE ONLY PART THAT
MATTERS, ANYWAY.

HTD L-O-S-T.

AND HE
LOST
BIG!

A Tight
Family
P 6
NIGHT OWL

DAILY BUGLE

★★★★
FINAL

NEW YORK, TUESDAY, NOV. 2, 1976, 63RD YEAR

SCANDAL PLUCKS DUCK

EXCELLENT,
MON AM.--TRES
NIFTY! A MOST
EXTRAORDINARY
FEAT OF PUBLIC
RELATIONS--
FOR A BELLBOY.

HOWEVER, AS
YOU KNOW, WE
RECEIVE YOUR
NEWS ON A DELAY
UP HERE.

PART OF THE
PLOT TO KEEP
US BACK-
WARD, EH?

BUT YOU'RE
A U.S. CITIZEN...
THEY WOULD'VE
TOLD YOU!
WHAT WAS THE
OUTCOME OF
THE ELECTION?

POLLSTERS SAY HE'S FINISHED

BATTY HEARST-- GIRL OR AUTOMOBILE? SEE PG. 12
GARINE-- OLEO OR BUST? SEE PG. 12
--EX-PREXY OR LIVE BAIT? SEE PG. 12



I TOLD YOU-- HOWARD DIDN'T
WIN. EVEN BACK HOME,
NOBODY CARES WHO **DID**.

NOW WHEN DO
I GET MY **MONEY**?

SIGH: I THOUGHT
WE'D **SETTLED**
THAT. YOU DID
IT ALL FOR
AMERICA, NON?

AND TO
AVENGE YOUR
BELOVED
BROTHER?



OH-- OH, **YEAH!** I
ALMOST FORGOT! MY
BROTHER, **TOMMY!**
THE ONLY AMERICAN
KILLED IN VIETNAM--

-- BY A
DUCK!



HE WAS AN **ANTI-**
AIRCRAFT GUNNER,
TOMMY WAS--
BRAVEST MAN
I EVER KNEW!

HE SIGHTED
A **CHARLIE**
MIG OVER-
HEAD!

HE
FIRED!!



BUT HE
MISSED--

--AND HIT
A **WILD**
DUCK
INSTEAD!



DOWN SPUN
THE DIRTY
COMM E FOWL--

--IN A
SPECTACULAR
DEATH-DIVE
FROM HUNDREDS
OF FEET IN THE
AIR--



--ONLY TO LAND
ON A VIETCONG
LAND MINE
SIX INCHES
FROM TOMMY'S
FACE!

BOOM!



I'VE **HATED** DUCKS
EVER SINCE! TO LET
ONE BE ELECTED
PRESIDENT OF THE
COUNTRY TOMMY
DIED FOR--!

YEAH, THAT'S
WHY I DID IT!
BUT WHAT ABOUT
YOU? YOU'RE
NOT AN AMERICAN!
WHY'D **YOU** DO IT?

OH, JUST FOR
GIGGLES.

HEE.
HEE.
HEE.

NEW YORK: AMID THE RUBBLE OF HTD CAMPAIGN HQ, THE DUCK, HIS COMPANION BEVERLY SWITZLER, AND COUNTRY WESTERN SINGER DREYFUSS GULCH POWDER THE EXISTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES OF COAST-TO-COAST PUBLIC HUMILIATION.

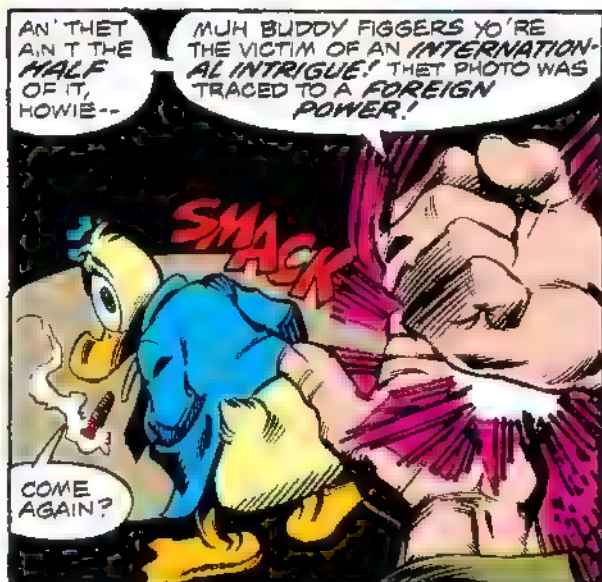
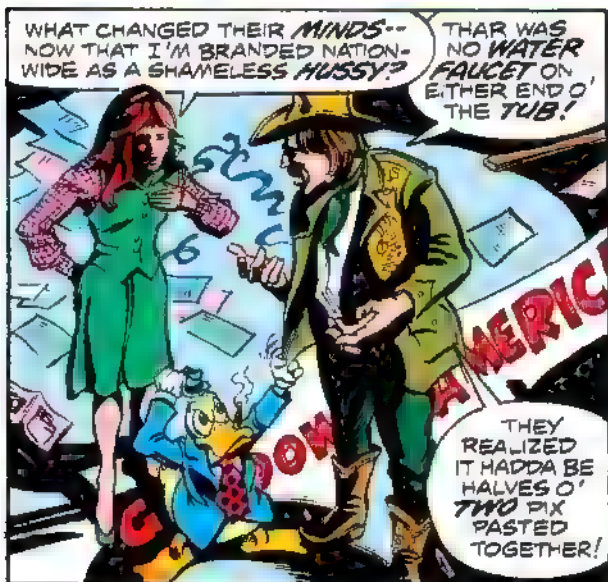
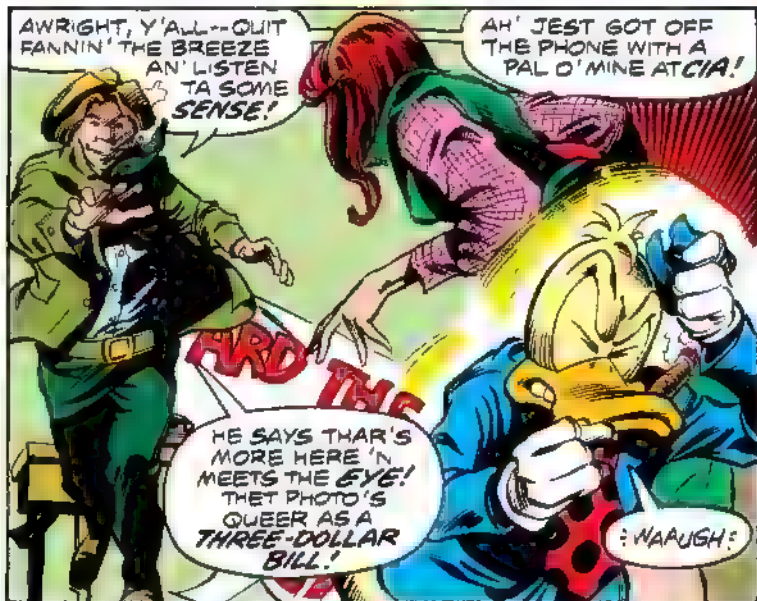
AAA--WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE? I MEAN, IT'S NOT LIKE I THIRSTED AFTER THE PRESIDENCY!

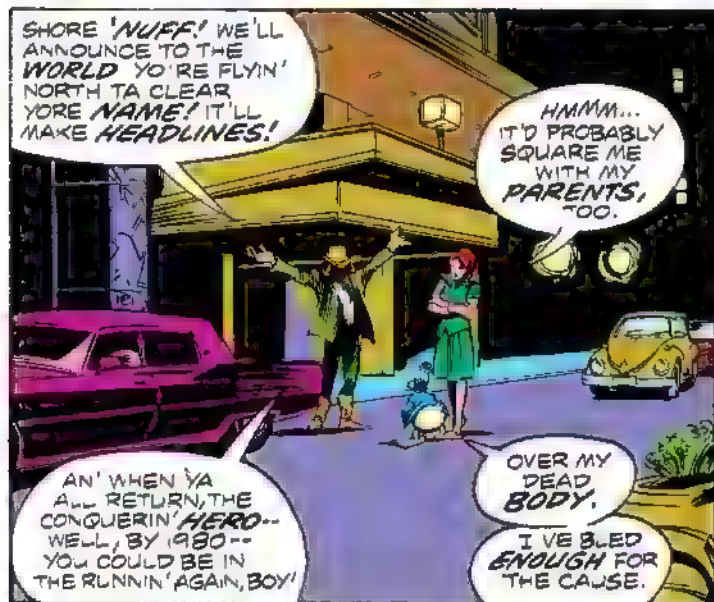
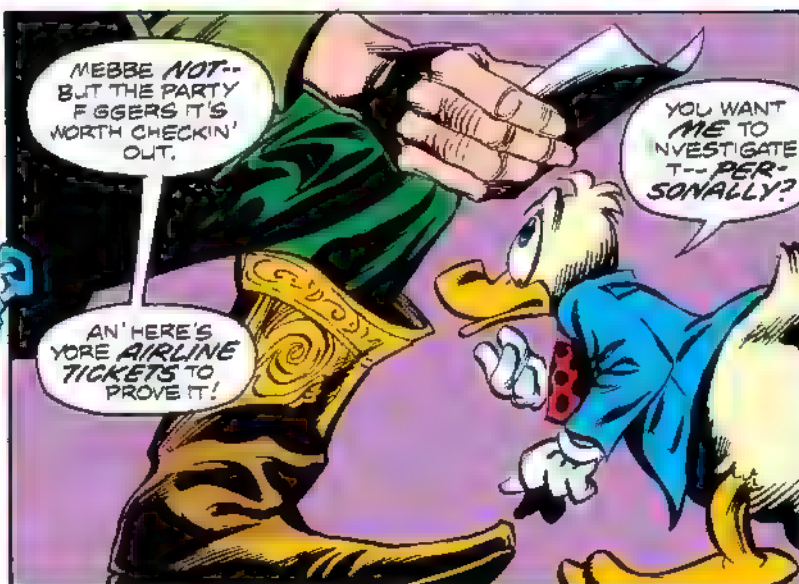
I JUST WANTED A PROJECT TO OCCUPY MY TIME 'TIL NOVEMBER!

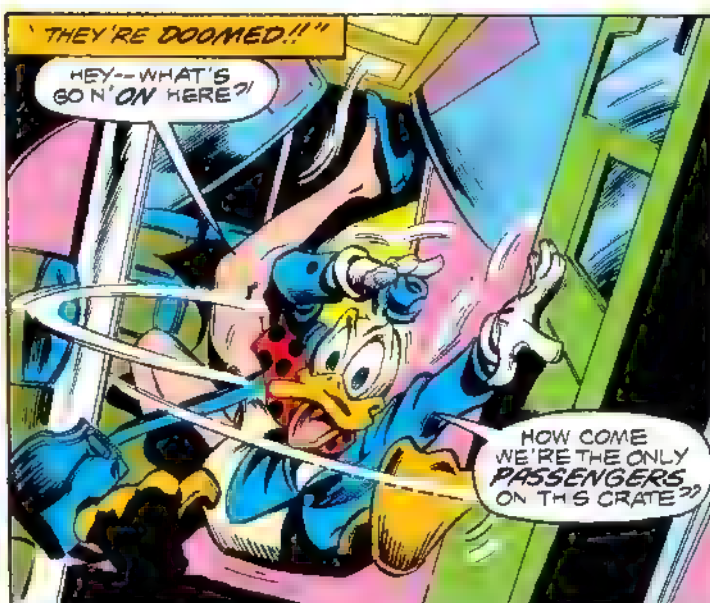
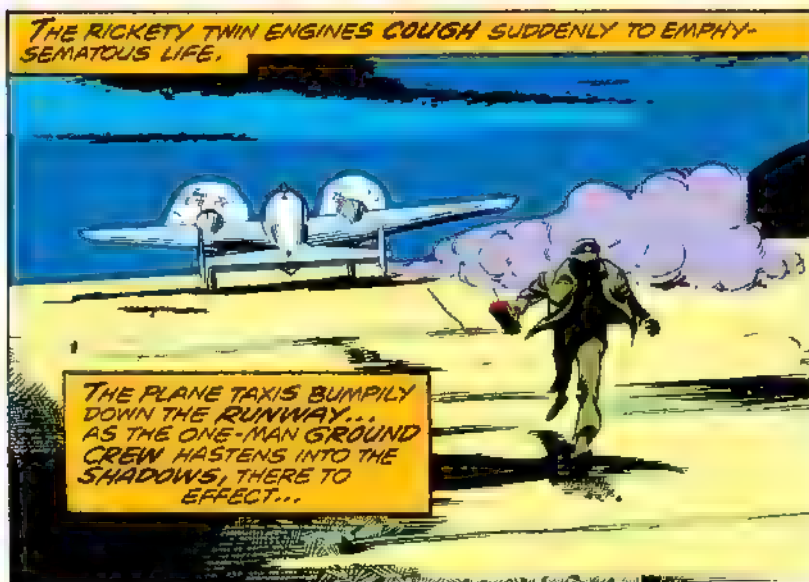
WELL, NOVEMBER'S HERE, DUCKY-- AND AS USUAL, YOU'RE STILL THINKING ONLY OF YOURSELF!

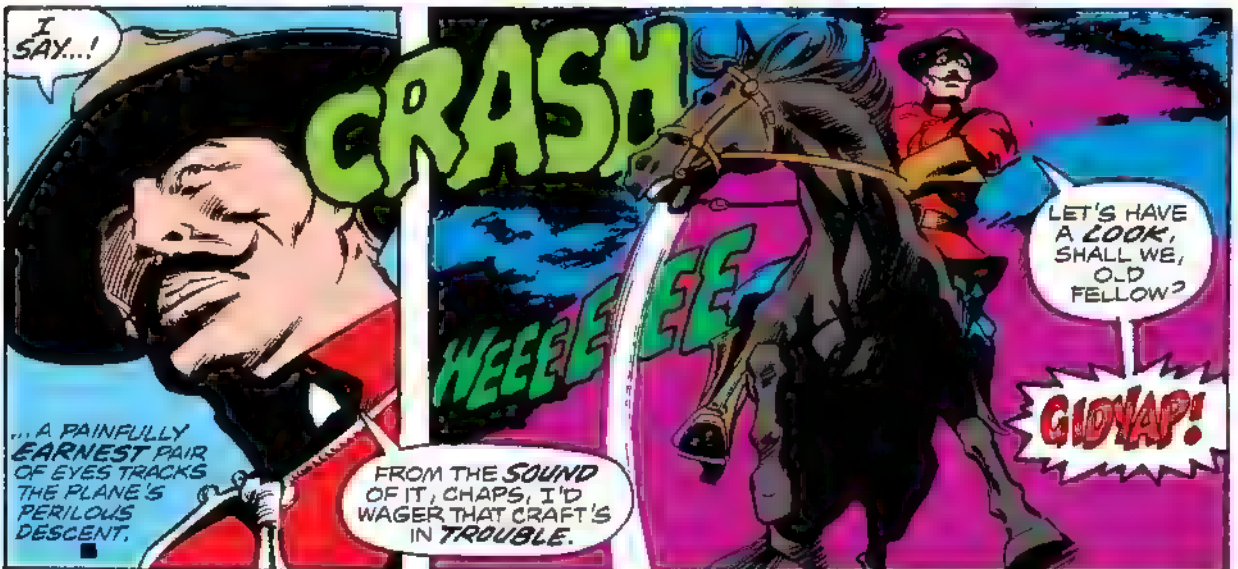
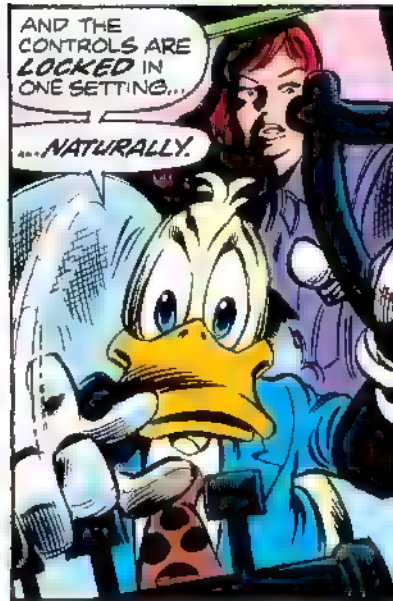
WHAT ABOUT MY REPUTATION? DO YOU KNOW HOW LONG AND HARD I WORKED TO CONVINCE EVERYBODY IN CLEVELAND I WAS A GOOD GIRL??

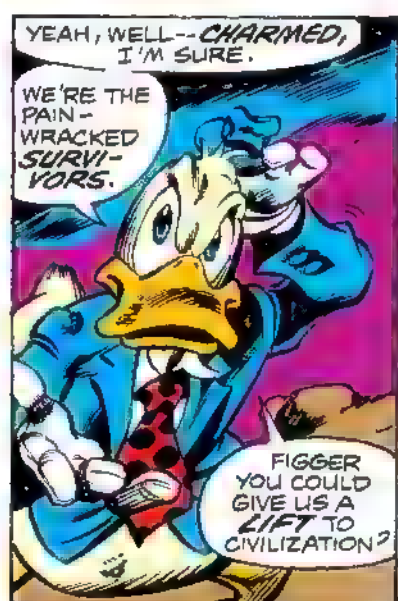
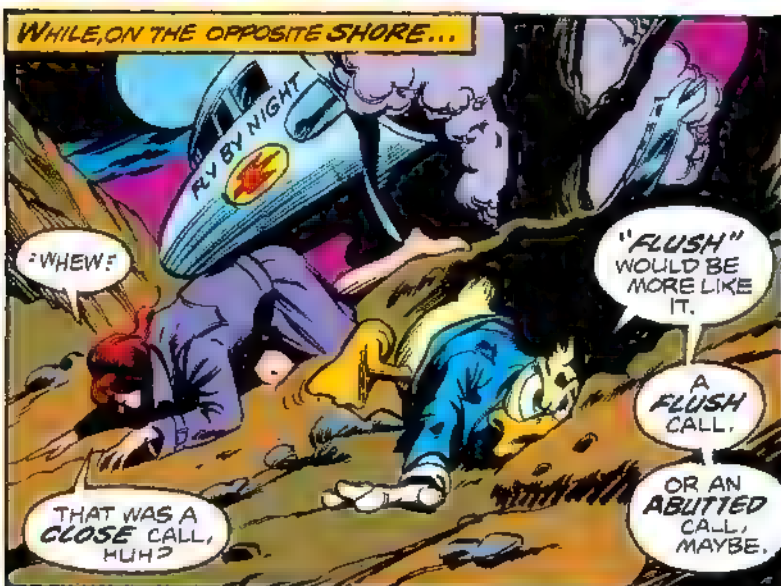


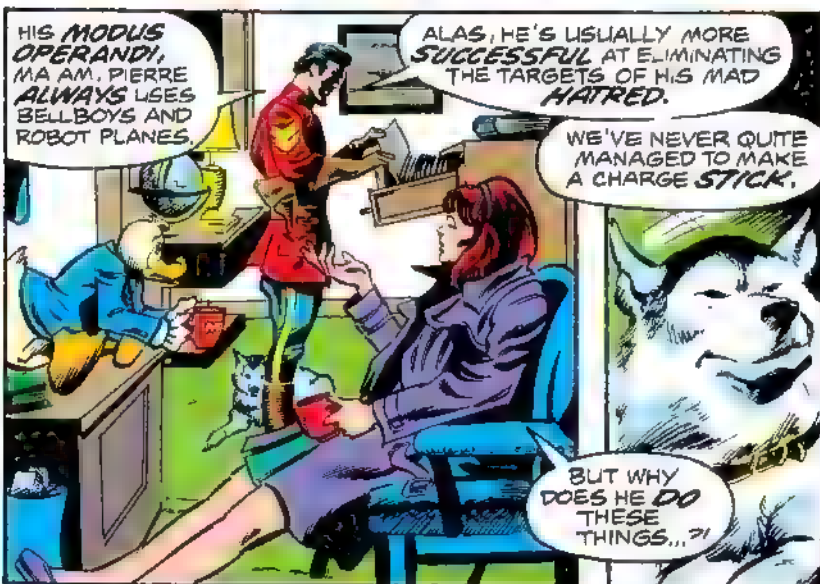
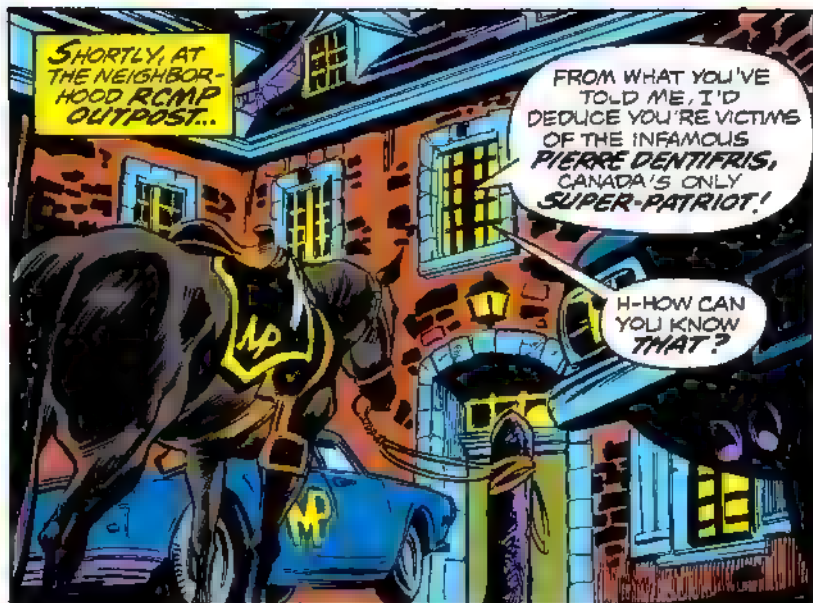


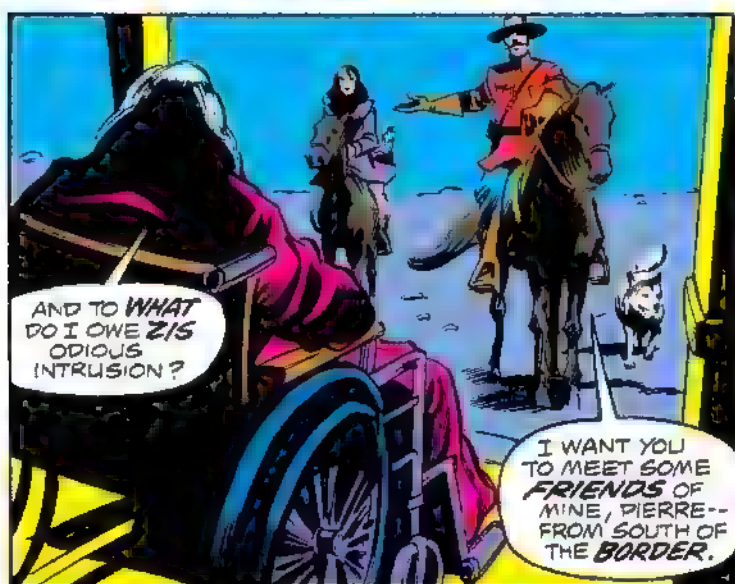
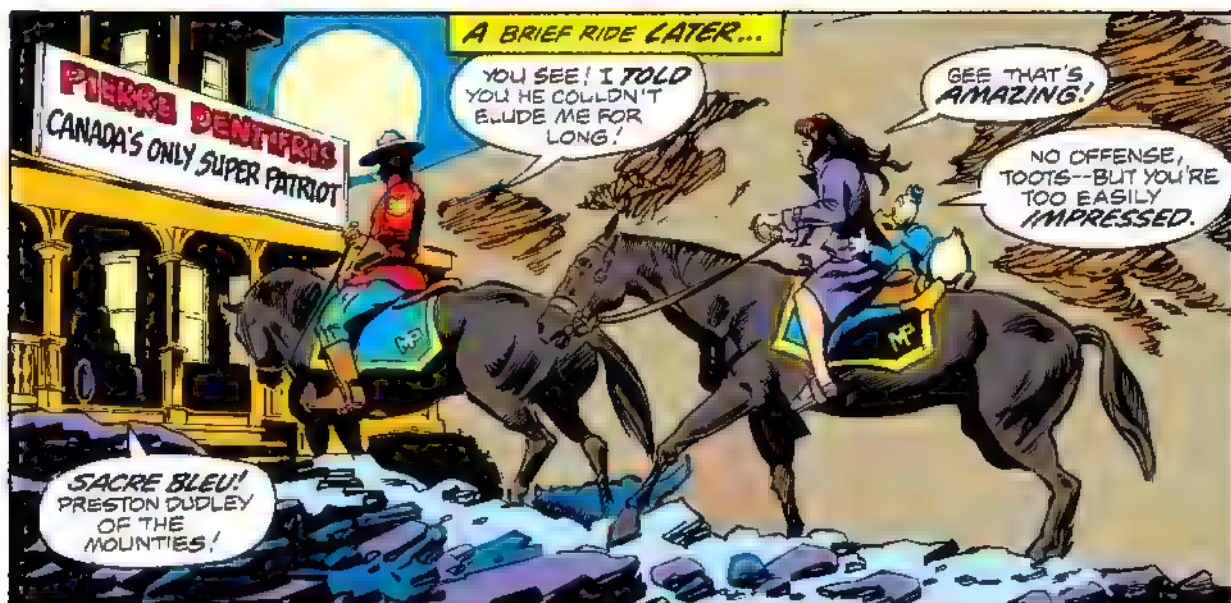


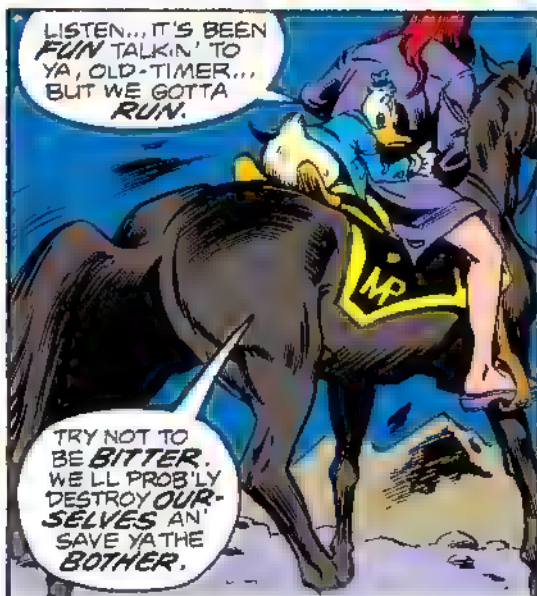
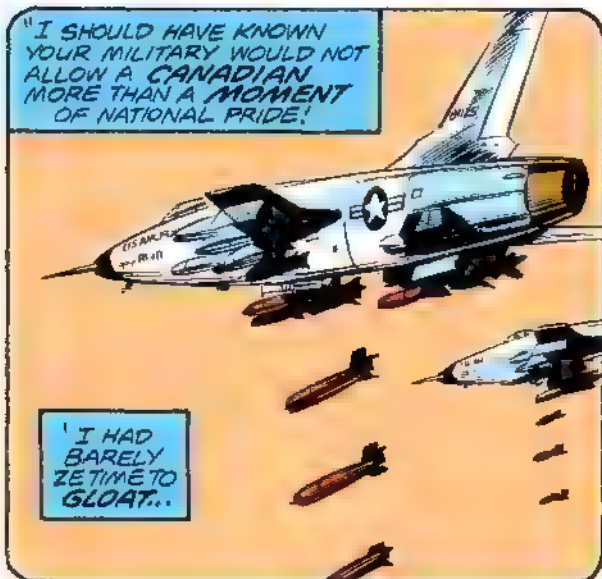














WAIT, YOU TWO! I THOUGHT YOU WANTED TO HAMMER THE SCOUNDREL!



OR HAVE YOU CHOSEN NOT TO BECOME... INVOLVED?

AW, COME OFF IT, DUDLEY! TH'S OLD COOT'S OUTTA HIS MAPLE TREE!

AN' WE NEED SOME SLEEP!



VERY WELL... BUT YOU MAY LIVE TO RE-GRET THIS DECISION.

OH NO, HE WON'T! I SHALL SEE TO ZAT!

BELLHOP!



HE SURVIVED. I FAILED YOU-- AND TOMMY.

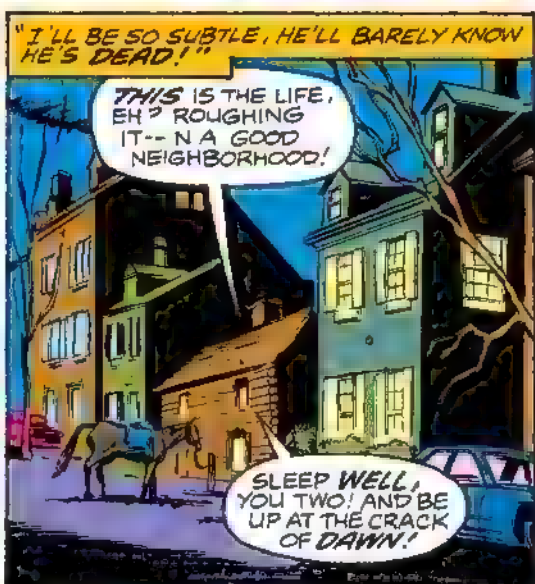
PLEASE LET ME KILL HIM AGAIN! I BEG YOU!

NATURE-MENT.



BUT SINCE YOU BUN- GLED ZE ROBOT PLANE, I SUGGEST YOU EMPLOY MORE COMPLEX, SUBTLE MEANS ZIS TIME.

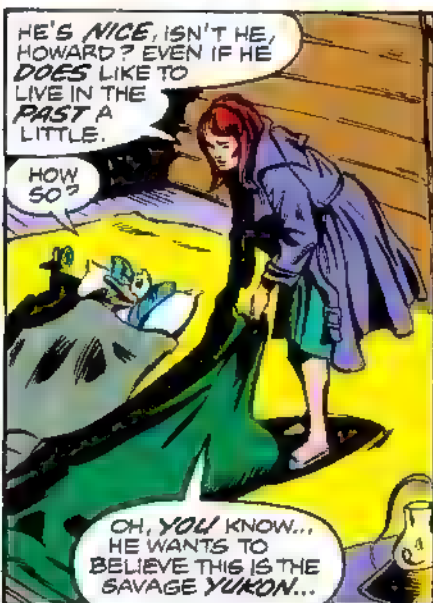
I WILL! I WILL!



"I'LL BE SO SUBTLE, HE'LL BARELY KNOW HE'S DEAD!"

THIS IS THE LIFE, EH? ROUGHING IT-- N A GOOD NEIGHBORHOOD!

SLEEP WELL, YOU TWO! AND BE UP AT THE CRACK OF DAWN!



HE'S NICE, ISN'T HE, HOWARD? EVEN IF HE DOES LIKE TO LIVE IN THE PAST A LITTLE.

HOW SO?

OH, YOU KNOW... HE WANTS TO BELIEVE THIS IS THE SAVAGE YUKON...



...WHEN WE'RE 60 MILES FROM LONDON, ONTARIO, AND 200,000 PEOPLE!

WE'VE ALL GOT OUR ILLUSIONS, TOOTS-- YOU, ME, PRESTON, PIERRE...

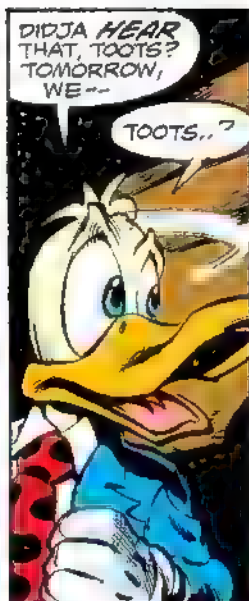
IN FACT, I KEEP WONDERIN' IF ANYBODY'S GOT A LINE ON REALITY ANYMORE.





NO MATTER, I'LL RUN HIM IN POST-HASTE.

AND COME DAWN--WE STALK PIERRE HIMSELF!



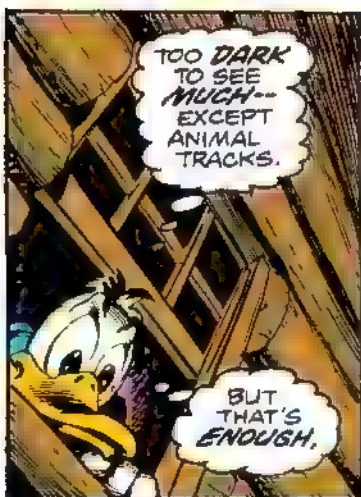
DIDJA HEAR THAT, TOOTS? TOMORROW, WE--

TOOTS..?



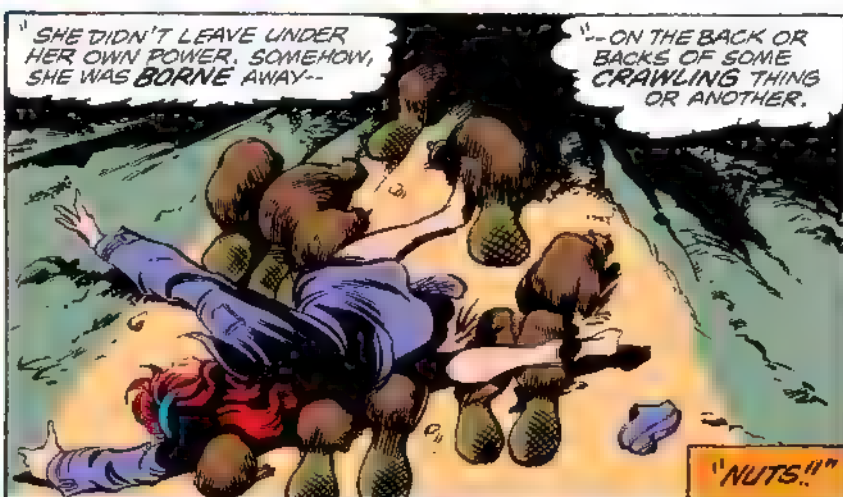
I SHOULD'A KNOWN, NOTHIN'S EVER THAT EASY.

SHE'S GONE-- AN' THE WINDOW'S THE ONLY EGRESS.



TOO DARK TO SEE MUCH-- EXCEPT ANIMAL TRACKS.

BUT THAT'S ENOUGH.



"SHE DIDN'T LEAVE UNDER HER OWN POWER, SOMEHOW, SHE WAS BORNE AWAY--

--ON THE BACK OR BACKS OF SOME CRAWLING THING OR ANOTHER.

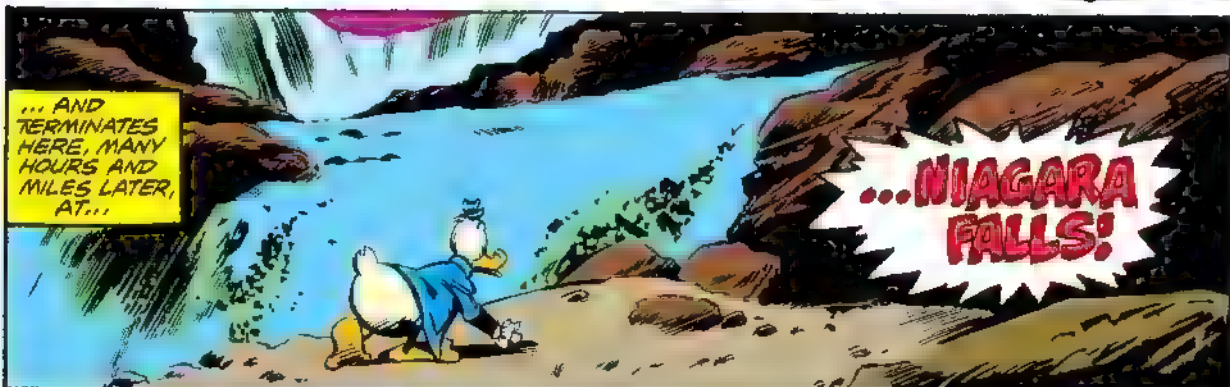
"NUTS!!"



HERE I GO A' FOLLOWIN' AGAIN-- NO DOUBT D' RECTLY INTO THE EAR, NOSE, OR THROAT OF DEATH.

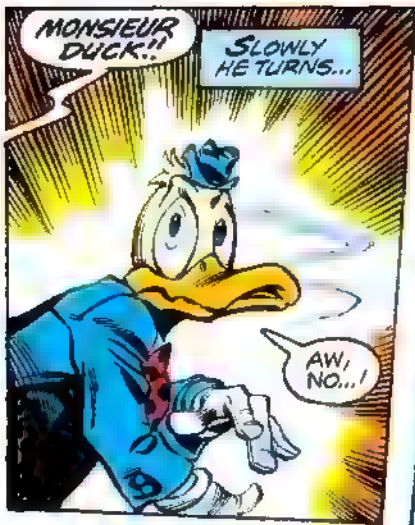
MY HEAD IS STARTIN' TO ACHE.

THE TRAIL LEADS INTO THE DEEP WOODS, EASTWARD TOWARD THE DAWN...



... AND TERMINATES HERE, MANY HOURS AND MILES LATER, AT...

... NIAGARA FALLS!



MONSIEUR DUCK!!

SLOWLY HE RETURNS...

AW, NO...!

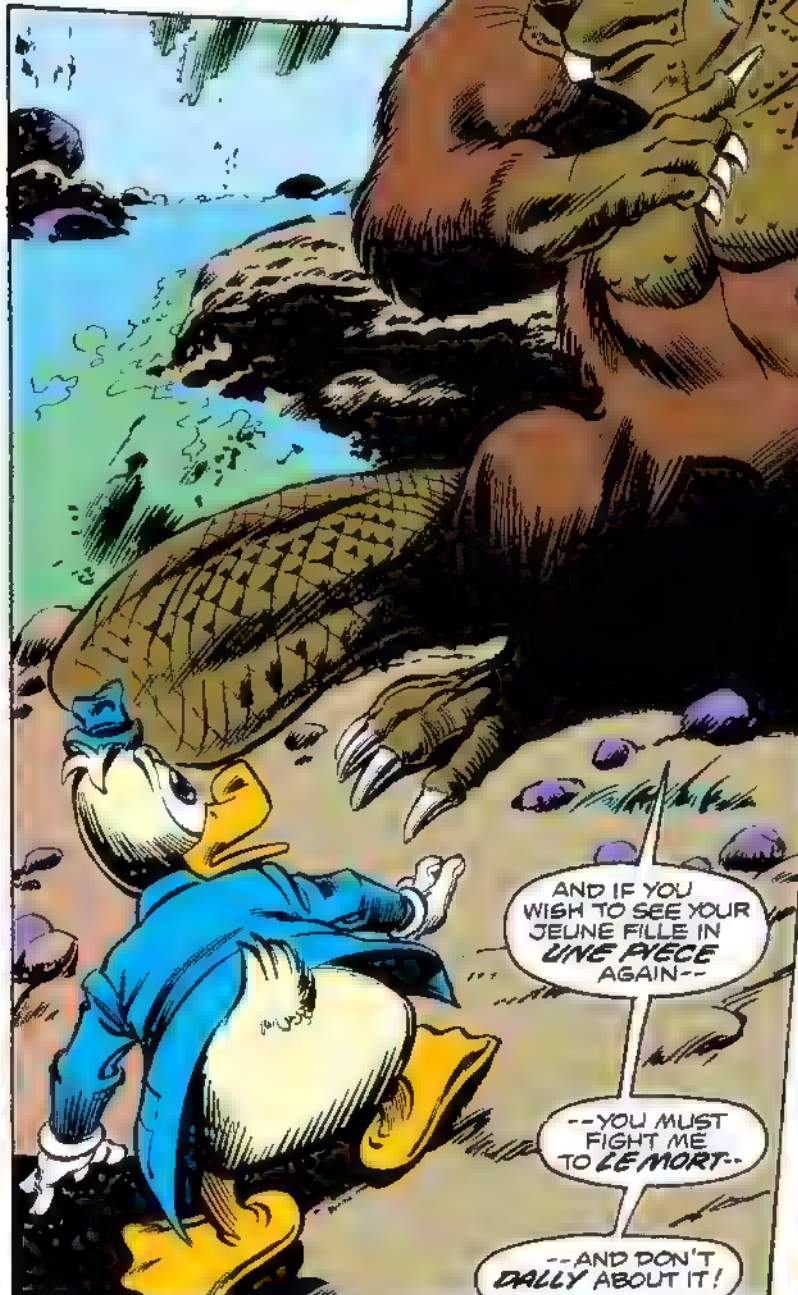


AW, OUI, MONSIEUR! IT IS I--PIERRE DENTIFRIS--IN ZE MOST FORMIDABLE EXOSKELETON EVER DEvised BY MAN!!

VOUS THOUGHT I WAS A HELPLESS CRIPPLE--ZE WAY ALL YOU AMERICANS THINK OF CANADA ITSELF!

WELL, IT IS NOT VRAI! I AM--LE

BEAVER!



AND IF YOU WISH TO SEE YOUR JEUNE FILLE IN LIVE PEECE AGAIN--

--YOU MUST FIGHT ME TO LE MORT--

--AND DON'T DALLY ABOUT IT!



HOWARD... HE'S NOT KIDDING! THE TREE'S WOBBLING ALREADY!

CHOMP
CHOMP
CHOMP

CHEW
CHEW



MY PETS WILL STOP
GNAWING ONLY WHEN
I COMMAND ZEM--

--OR IF I
DIE AND ZEY
HAVE NOTHING
TO LIVE FOR.

B-BUT...

JE SAIS!
VOUS ARE
ASKING
YOURSELF...
WHAT HAS ZIS
TO DO FROM
AMERICAN
PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTIONS,
NON?

WELL, YEAH...
THE QUESTION
DID CROSS MY
MIND...!

IT HAS TO DO WITH
SHADOWS, DUCKEE!
CANADA HAS WILTED
IN AMERICA'S
FOR TOO LONG!



WE HAVE WATCHED
WHILE VOUS **SQUAN-**
DERED YOUR NATURAL
RESOURCES... WAITING
FEARFULLY FOR YOUR
APPETITES TO TURN
NORTHWARD WHEN
YOUR OWN TERRITORY
WAS **GUTTED!**

SO I **ARRANGED**
FOR VOUS TO BE
NOMINATED BY THE
ALL-NIGHT PARTY!

I **WANTED**
TO OFFER A
COMPLETELY
HONEST
CANDIDATE--
THEN **RUIN**
HIM IN ZE
PUBLIC
EYEBALL!



HAA...?

LOOK, BUCK-TOOTH,
MAYBE I'M A LITTLE
DENSE, BUT--

FOOL! YOUR
DEFEAT WOULD
LAY BARE ZE
UTTER **ROTTEN-**
NESS OF YOUR
NATION'S POLITICAL
PROCESS!

I WOULD
HAVE
ENGINEERED
ZE **DISPIRIT**
OF '76!!

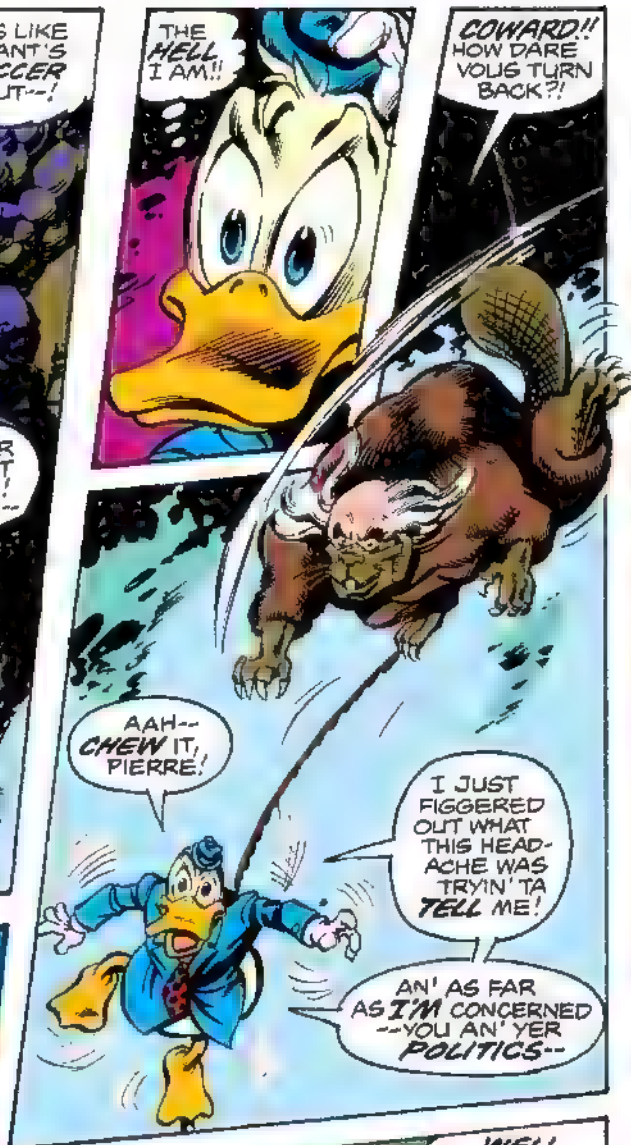


**CANADA COULD
ANNEX THE
UNITED STATES!!**

--AND BE
WELCOMED AS
HEROES! MY
COUNTRY WOULD
BE REDEEMED,
OUR PARANOIA
TURNED **UPSIDE-**
DOWN!



THEN, YOUR ALREADY
APATHETIC COUNTRYMEN
CONSUMED WITH **DESPAIR**,
MY PETS AND I COULD
INVADE ZE U.S.--



HOWARD
THE DUCK

MARVEL® COMICS GROUP



30¢

10

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02415

TRAPPED IN A WORLD HE NEVER MADE!

HOWARD THE DUCK

OUT OF THE EGG

...INTO THE
FRYING
PAN!



DOOM
IN A DARK
DIMENSION!

From the time of his hatching, he was...different. A potentially brilliant scholar who dreaded the structured environment of school, he educated himself in the streets, taking whatever work was available, formulating his philosophy of self from what he learned of the world about him. And then the Cosmic Axis shifted...and that world *changed*. Suddenly, he was stranded in a universe he could not fathom. Without warning, he became a strange fowl in an even stranger land.

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ARTIST

STEVE LEIALOHA
INKER

JIM NOVAK, LETTERER
JAN COHEN, COLORIST

TED SALLIS
CONSULTING SCHIZO

"IN THE BEGINNINGS WAS THE
SAFE DARK AND COZY WARM
AND THE NESTLED LIP
AGAINST MYSELF."

"AND ALL THAT PSEUDO-
POETIC VERBAL GARBAGE."

"THEN--AND I'LL NEVER
FORGIVE 'ER FOR THIS--!
NATURE DECREED
THAT TRANQUILITY
WAS NOT ENOUGH!"

"THUS, FOR NO
APPARENT REASON,
I S-T-R-E-T-C-H-E-D."

"HUZZAH! EMERGENCE! BIG
CLUCKING DEAL! THERE I WAS
IN A BIGGER, MORE TEPID
BLACKNESS. SO WHAT?"

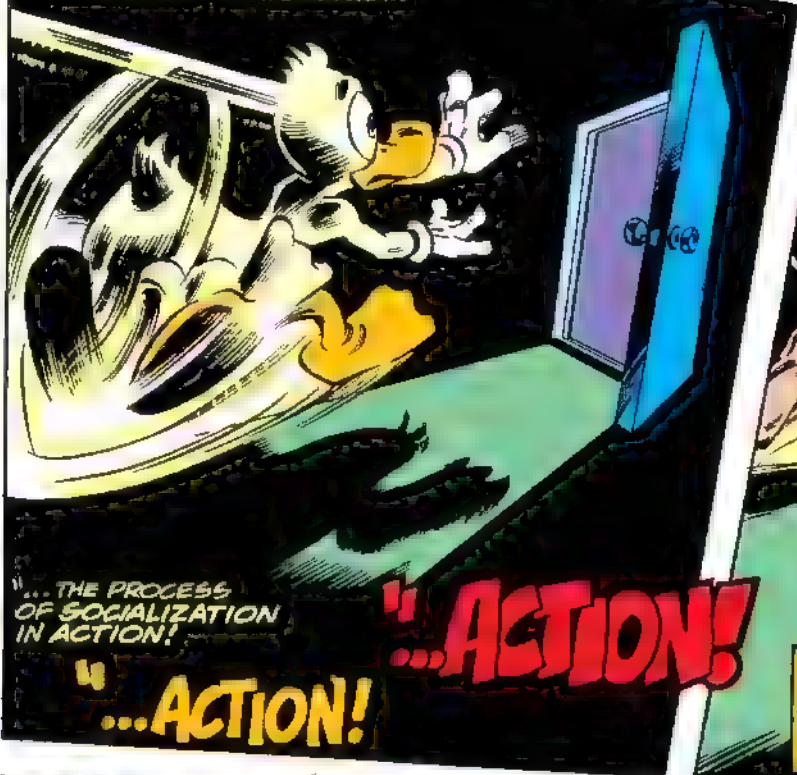
"SO HERE'S WHAT: ONCE YA
TAKE THAT FIRST STUPID
STEP-- YA CAN NEVER GO
HOME AGAIN!"

SWAN- song

KRAMM

...OF THE LIVING DEAD DUCK!

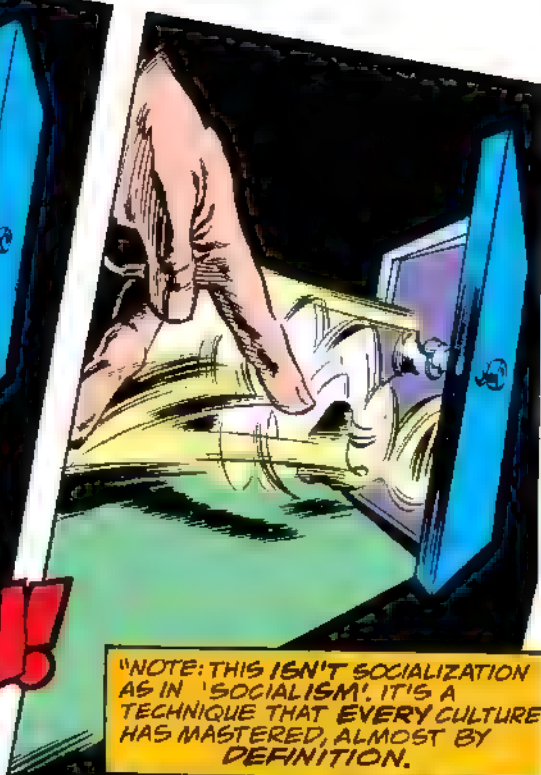
"NOW WATCH CLOSELY, KIDS,
YOU'RE ABOUT TO OBSERVE..."



"...THE PROCESS
OF SOCIALIZATION
IN ACTION!"

"...ACTION!"

!...ACTION!

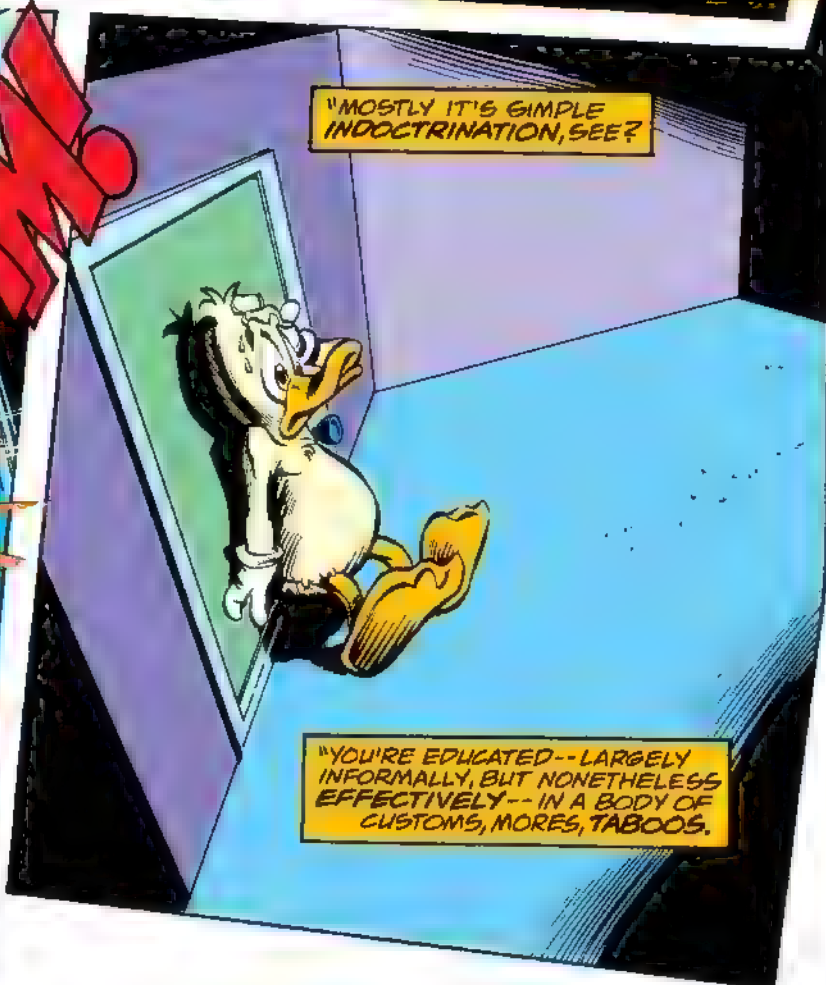


"NOTE: THIS ISN'T SOCIALIZATION
AS IN 'SOCIALISM'. IT'S A
TECHNIQUE THAT EVERY CULTURE
HAS MASTERED, ALMOST BY
DEFINITION."



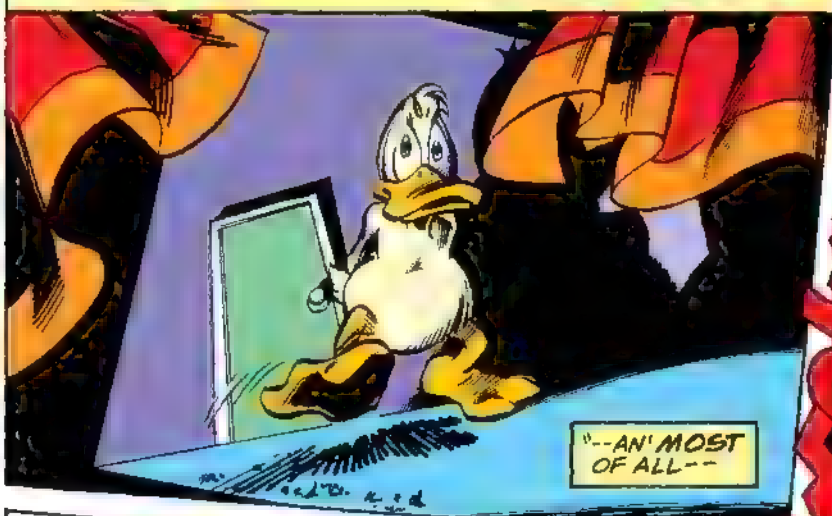
"AND ANY IDEOLOGY CAN
PLAY. (LISTEN, IF THIS'S
GETTIN' TOO PEDANTIC
FOR YA, JUST HOLLER.
I'LL TRY TA TONE IT
DOWN.) ANYWAY..."

"MOSTLY IT'S SIMPLE
INDOCTRINATION, SEE?"



"YOU'RE EDUCATED-- LARGELY
INFORMALLY, BUT NONETHELESS
EFFECTIVELY-- IN A BODY OF
CUSTOMS, MORES, TABOOS."

"YA LEARN NOT TA YELL 'FIRE' IN A CROWDED THEATRE-- NOT TA GO 'HUBBA-HUBBA' AT PICTURES OF ELEANOR ROOSEVELT--

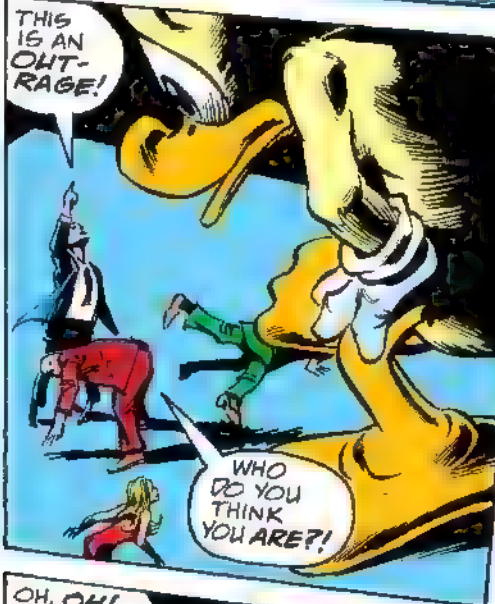


"--AN' MOST OF ALL--

"--YA LEARN THERE'S CERTAIN PLACES YER SUPPOSED TA TREAD LIGHTLY!"

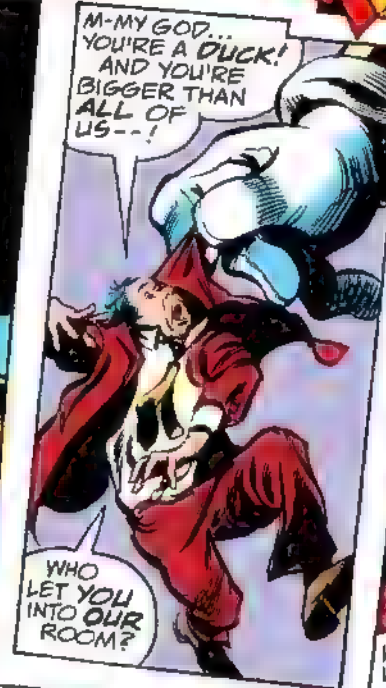


THIS IS AN OUT-RAGE!



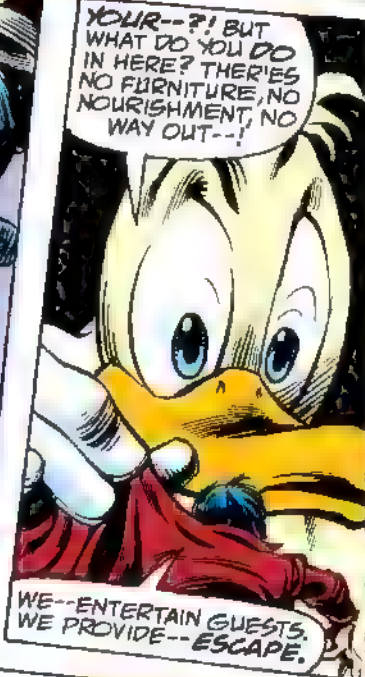
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?!

M-MY GOD... YOU'RE A DUCK! AND YOU'RE BIGGER THAN ALL OF US--!



WHO LET YOU INTO OUR ROOM?

YOUR--?! BUT WHAT DO YOU DO IN HERE? THERE'S NO FURNITURE, NO NOURISHMENT, NO WAY OUT--!



WE--ENTERTAIN GUESTS. WE PROVIDE--ESCAPE.

OH, OH! SURE, I GET IT! I ESCAPED INTA--



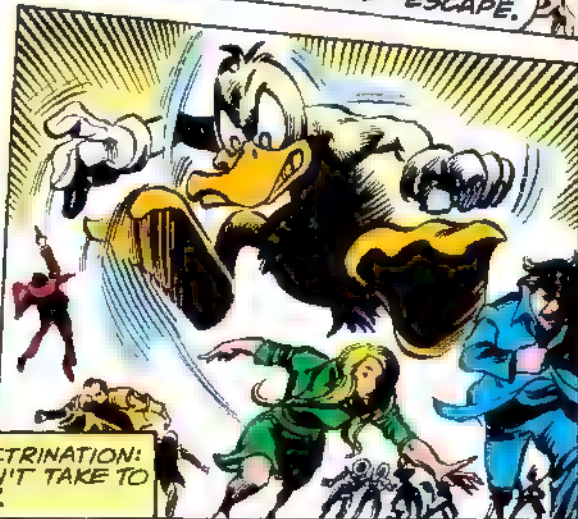
INDEED, AND HERE YOU'LL STAY.

YOUR VERY EXISTENCE POSES TOO MANY QUESTIONS, DUCK!



WE'VE NO ROOM FOR A FLUKE LIKE YOURSELF! THEREFORE--

OH, YEAH??



"ONE THING ABOUT INDOCTRINATION: SOME OF US JUST DON'T TAKE TO IT NATURALLY."

"SO THERE'S GOTTA BE A MEANS OF ENFORCEMENT--AN' SOME DUDE HEAVY ENOUGH TA MAKE IT BELIEVABLE."

DESIST, DUCK!!

I AM KONG LOMERATE--AND AND I OWN THOSE PEOPLE YOU'RE TRAMPLING!

UH-OH.

BUT... Y'YOU'RE A HIRSUITE APE! ON THIS WORLD YOU CAN'T--

AND YOU, TOO, MUST OBEY ME, OR...

WRONG! IT'S BECAUSE I'M NOT HUMAN THAT MY WORD IS LAW! I ONLY EXIST ON PAPER!

AAAH--GO SUCK A BEEF JERKY! I'M MY OWN DUCK! I GO WHERE I WANT, SAY WHAT I WANT--!

AN' I BEEN THUMBIN' MY BEAK AT GORILLAS LIKE YOU MY WHOLE LIFE!

BUT THEY NEVER POSSESSED MY POWER, FEATHERED UPSTART! THEY COULD MERELY BERATE YOU--!

I CAN WIPE EVERY TRACE OF YOU FROM THE FACE OF THIS "WORLD YOU NEVER MADE!"

WAAUGH!

WAHAM

CANCELLED

"OVER TIME, OF COURSE, AND AFTER A SUCCESSION OF FEATHER'S-BREADTH ESCAPES FROM THE SYSTEM, THE STRAIN BEGINS TO TELL."

"IN SOME, IT EVINCES ITSELF AS ANGER, IN OTHERS AS SELF-DOUBT. FOR ME, IT WAS AN OVERWHELMING SADNESS..."

"...AND UTTER APATHY TOWARD THE VERY BUSINESS OF LIVING."

"OUTWARDLY, I'M SURE IT LOOKED LIKE CYNICISM-- BUT A CYNIC'S JUST A FALLEN IDEALIST, RIGHT?"

"JUST A POOR GLOB LOOKING FOR ANY MORSEL OF INFO THAT'LL MOTIVATE 'IM AGAIN."

"YOO-HOO! GURU? ANYBODY HOME?"

"THE CAPED MAN ANSWERED WITH HIS EYES, INVITING ME IN."

"YOU GOTTA HELP ME-- YA GOTTA GIMME THE ANGWER! WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT? WHAT'S THE MEANING OF LIFE?"

"GIMME IT STRAIGHT! WHY AM I?"

"WHY NOT?"

WE'RE IN THE SAME BOAT, THEN, HUH? BUT AT LEAST I'VE GOT SOME CONTROL OVER MY DESTINY. I'VE GOT A FEW FACTS.

TWO AN' TWO IS STILL FOUR....!

AN' THEN THERE'S THE LAW OF--

--GRAVITY.

"I FIGGER THAT'S WHEN MY MOST CHERISHED NOTION--THAT 'FACTS' WERE MORE THAN ASSUMPTIONS BASED ON PAST OBSERVATIONS--DIED.

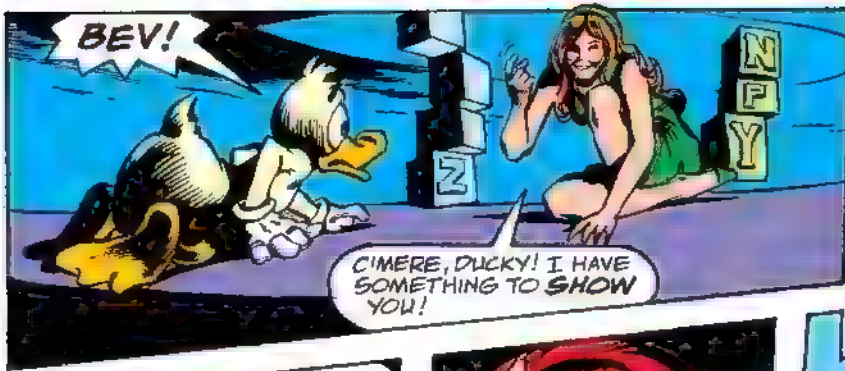
"THERE WAS NOTHIN' OUT THERE--OR IN HERE, FOR THAT MATTER--BUT THE VORTEX AT THE CENTER OF THE VOID."

GOO.

"SUDDENLY, I WAS SPOUTIN' DUCKLING TALK. NOTHIN' ELSE MADE SENSE. GOO. GWAK. GWAAAW. PEEP. DIDJA EVER GET THE FEELING YER WORDS WERE JUST FILLIN' DEAD AIR?"

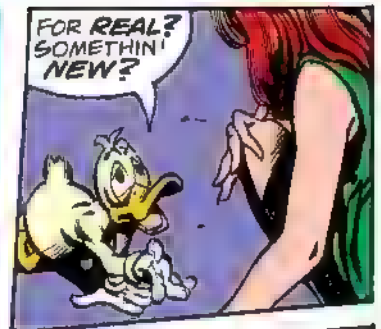
SPLAT

"PRATTLE AND TWATTLE AND SPLAT ON YER GUT! HERE'S SOMETHIN' TA LIFT YA OUTTA THAT RUT!"



BEV!

C'MERE, DUCKY! I HAVE SOMETHING TO SHOW YOU!



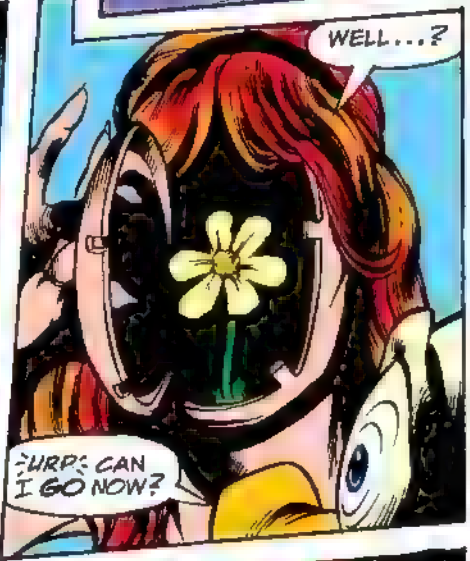
FOR REAL? SOMETHIN' NEW?



UH-HUH! THE TRUTH IS ALWAYS NEW!

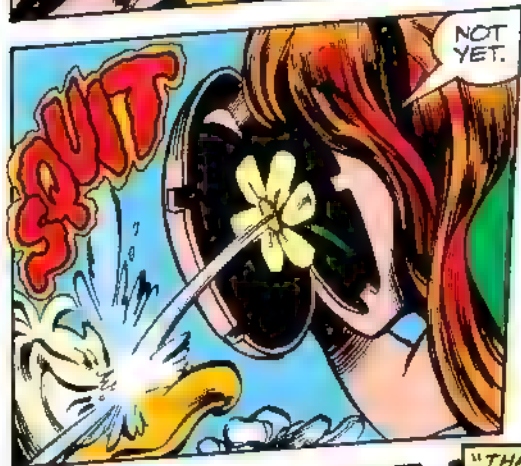


PEEK-A-BOO!



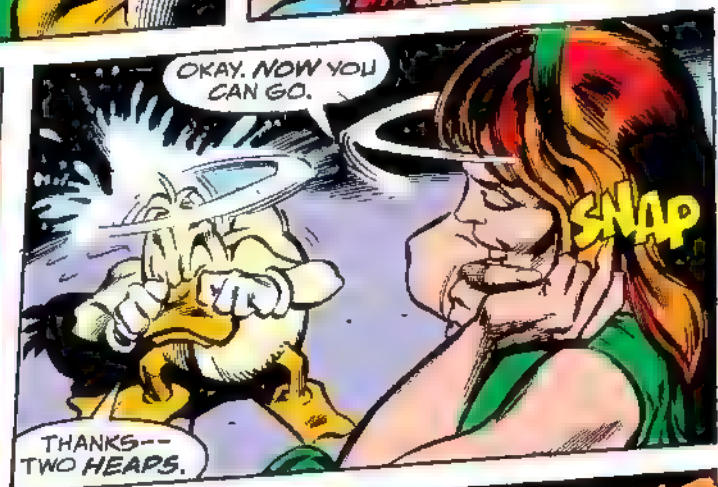
WELL...?

SURP: CAN I GO NOW?



SQUIT

NOT YET.



OKAY. NOW YOU CAN GO.

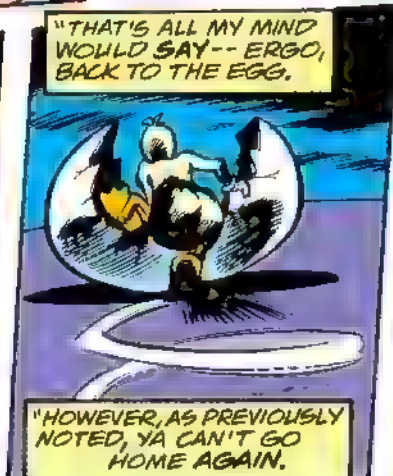
SNAP

THANKS-- TWO HEAPS.



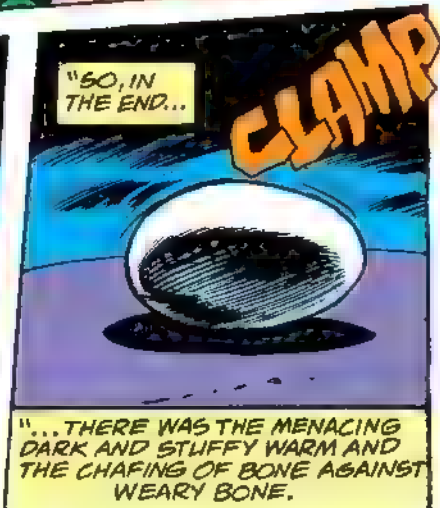
"THE EGG."

"BACK TO THE EGG. BACK TO THE EGG. BACK TO THE EGG."



"THAT'S ALL MY MIND WOULD SAY-- ERGO, BACK TO THE EGG."

"HOWEVER, AS PREVIOUSLY NOTED, YA CAN'T GO HOME AGAIN."

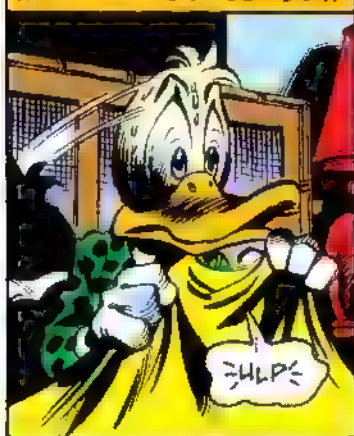


"SO, IN THE END..."

CLAMP

"...THERE WAS THE MENACING DARK AND STUFFY WARM AND THE CHAFING OF BONE AGAINST WEARY BONE."

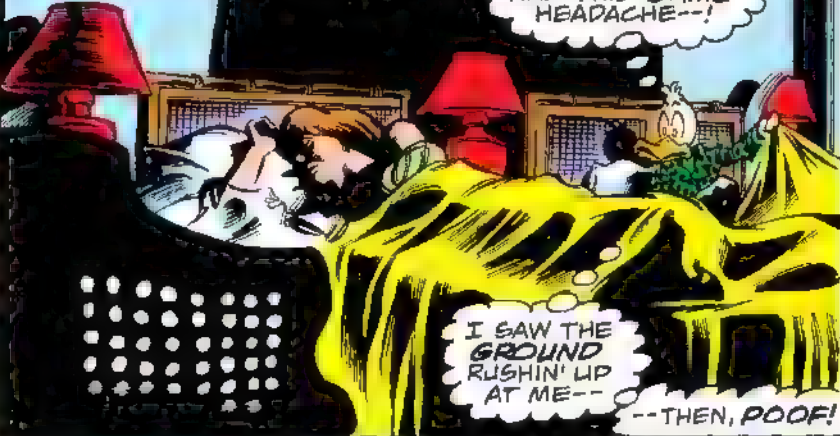
"AND, THEN I WOKE UP-- TOTALLY DISORIENTED, IN A COLD SWEAT, AN' WITH A HEADACHE THAT FELT LIKE MY SKULL HAD JUST RETURNED FROM TWO WEEKS IN NEW JERSEY."



WH-WHERE AM I?! LAST I REMEMBER, I'D JUST WALKED OUT ON THE FIGHT WITH THE BEAVER OVER NIAGARA FALLS! AN' NOW--NO! WAITAMINIT!

SOMETHIN' DID HAPPEN AFTER THAT--I THINK-- I COLLAPSED!

I SUDDENLY FELT SO TIRED--AN' I HAD THIS SAME HEADACHE--!



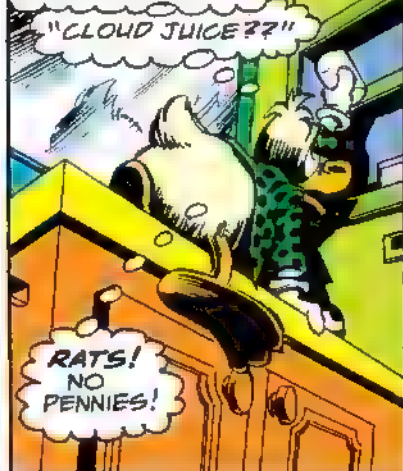
PRESTON DUPLEY-- THE PRIDE O' THE MOUNTIES-- MUST'A GIVEN US A LIFT HERE-- WHEREVER HERE IS! A MOTEL, I GUESS.



YEP-- THE WORLD'S LOOKIN' GOOD-- LIKE A CHOPPIN' BLOCK SHOULD.



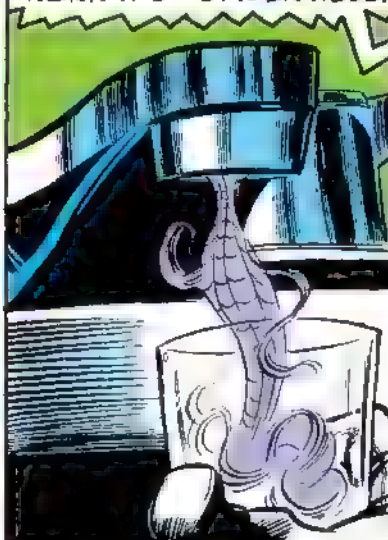
OH, WELL... A COUPLE'A ASPIRIN AN' SOME CLOUD JUICE OUGHTTA--

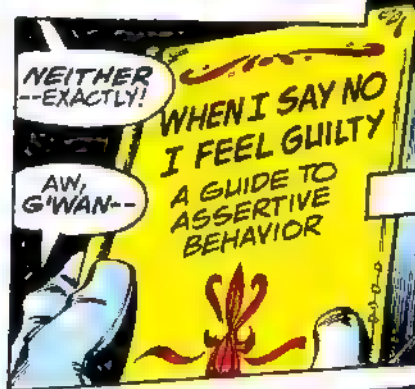
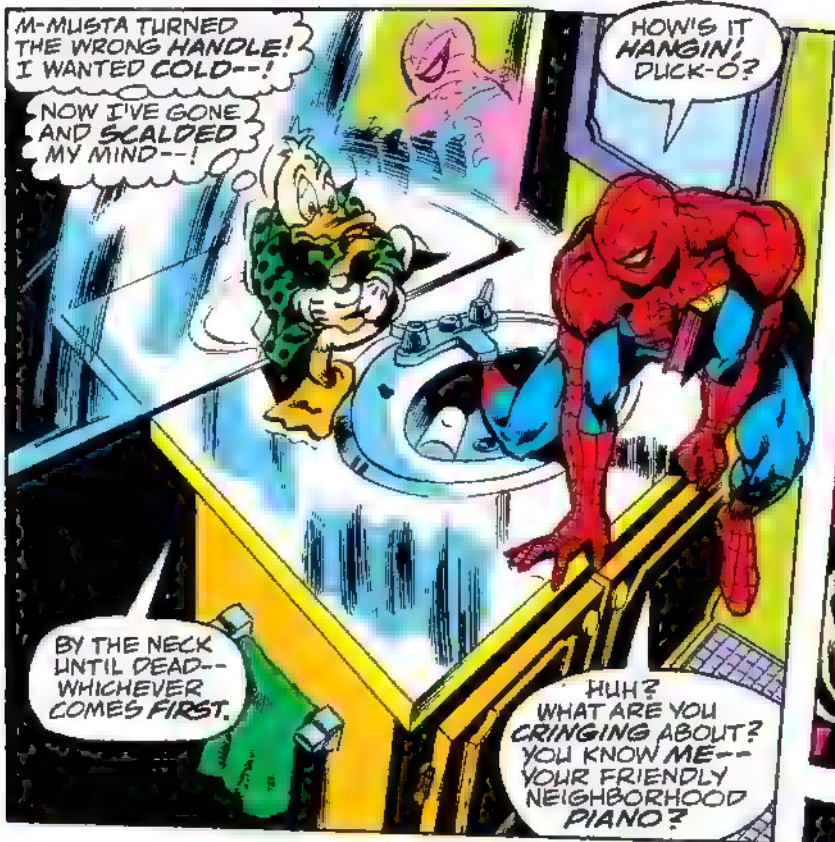


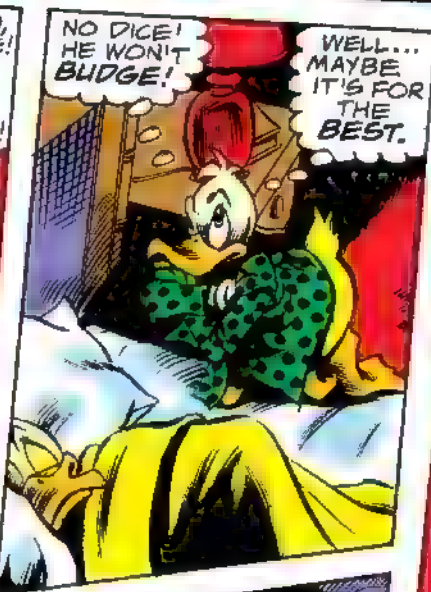
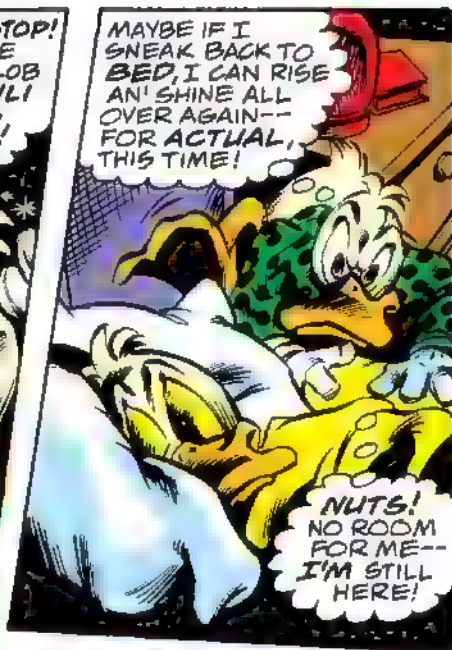
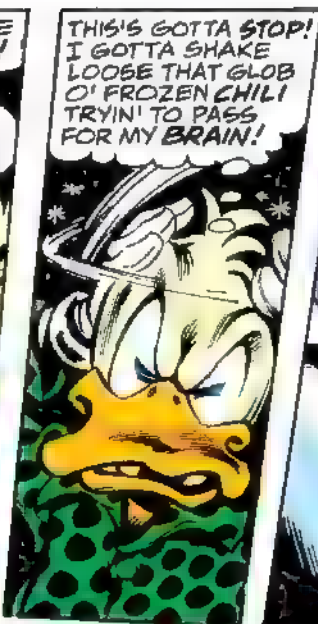
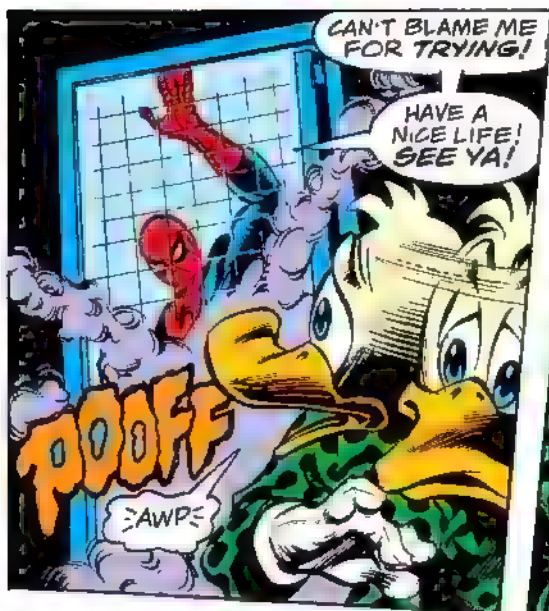
GUESS I'LL JUST HAVETA SETTLE FOR A GLASS OF PIANO, THEN.



WAAAAGHS THAT AIN'T IVORY! IT'S-- SPIDER WEBS!







"MY SELF-IMAGE HAS ALWAYS BEEN THAT OF AN
IRASCIBLE, SOMEWHAT HIGH-STRUNG, BUT EMINENTLY
LIKABLE DUCK. STUBBORN, BUT ABLE TO TAKE
CRITICISM AND EVALUATE IT DISPASSIONATELY.
OPINIONATED, BUT RECEPTIVE TO NEW IDEAS.
HOWEVER--

"I CAN'T STAND IT
WHEN PEOPLE CALL
ME NAMES!!"

HEY, GUYS--
LOOK! IT'S--
COWARD
THE
DUCK!

YOU GLUTTON!

STUFFED
SHIRT!

YOU PAUPER!

KNOW-
IT-
ALL!

PESSIMIST!

WAAUGH
OKAY, GUYS--
RELAX! I CAN
TAKE A HINT! I
KNOW WHEN
I'M NOT
WELCOME!

"THE BEAVER'S BELLHOP--
THE GIANT GINGER-
BREAD MAN-- THE
FINANCIAL WIZARD, PRO-
RATA-- TURNIP-MAN--
GONZO THE CLOWN--
WINKY-MAN--AND THEY
WEREN'T EVEN TAKING
ME SERIOUSLY!!

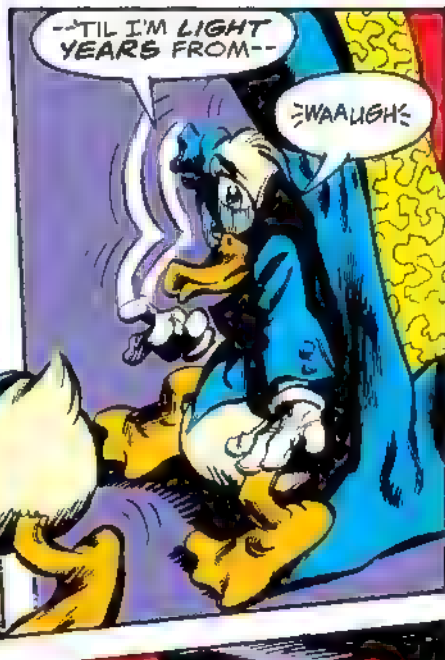




SEE? I'LL JUST BACK
RIGHT OUT ON YA--
LIKE I SHOULD'A
DONE WHEN I
FIRST MET YA!

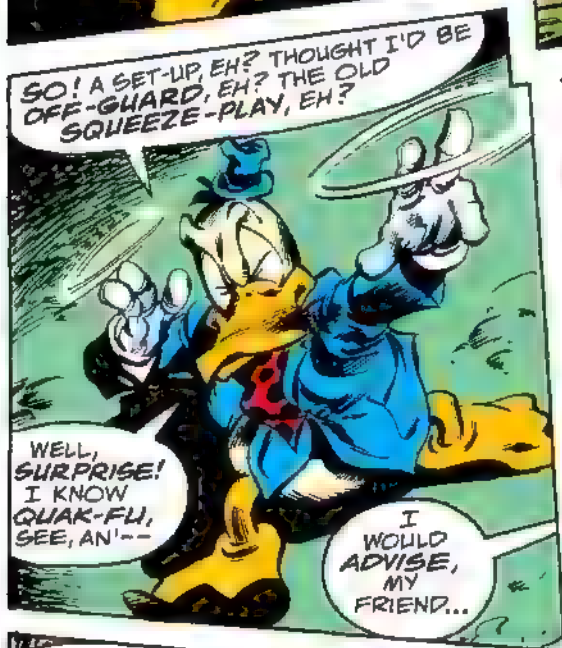


AN' I'LL
JUST KEEP
BACKIN'
AWAY--



--TIL I'M LIGHT
YEARS FROM--

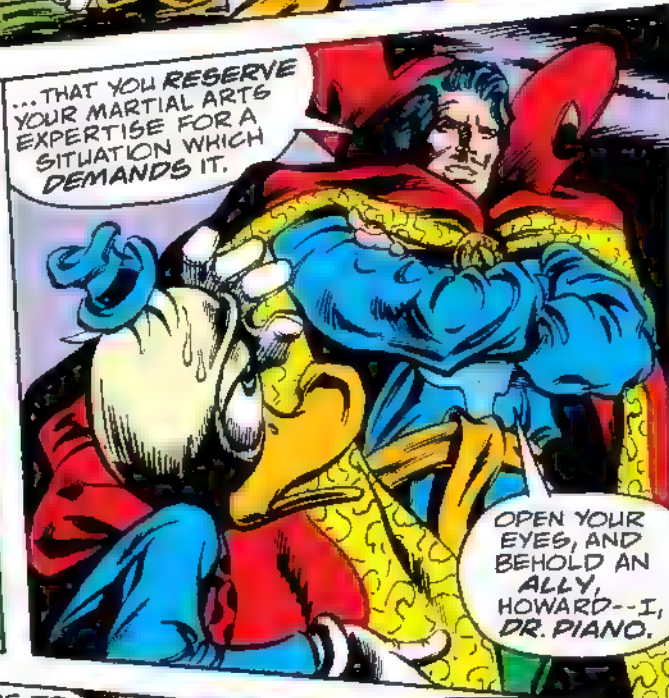
SWAAUGH



SO! A SET-UP, EH? THOUGHT I'D BE
OFF-GUARD, EH? THE OLD
SQUEEZE-PLAY, EH?

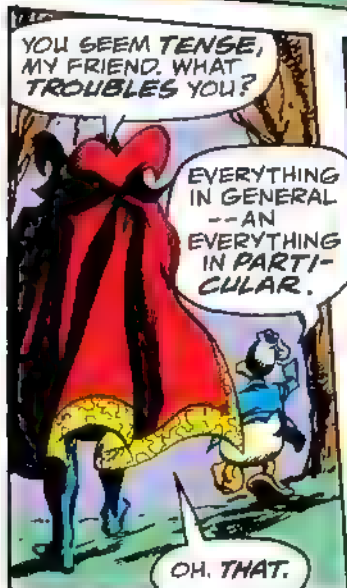
WELL,
SURPRISE!
I KNOW
QUAK-FU,
SEE, AN'--

I
WOULD
ADVISE,
MY FRIEND...



...THAT YOU RESERVE
YOUR MARTIAL ARTS
EXPERTISE FOR A
SITUATION WHICH
DEMANDS IT.

OPEN YOUR
EYES, AND
BEHOLD AN
ALLY,
HOWARD--I,
DR. PIANO.



YOU SEEM TENSE,
MY FRIEND. WHAT
TROUBLES YOU?

EVERYTHING
--AN
EVERYTHING
IN PARTI-
CULAR.

OH. THAT.



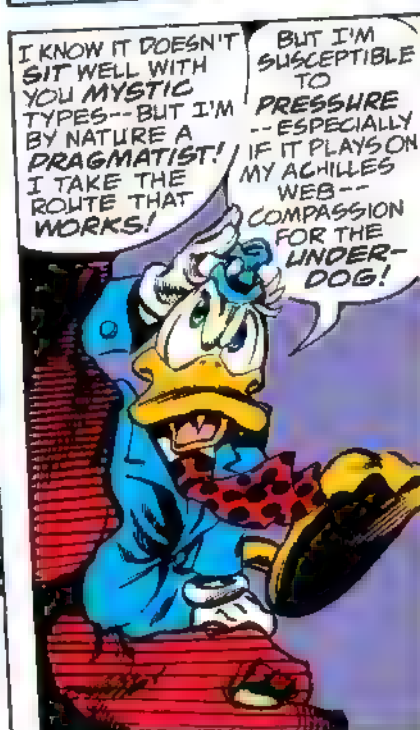
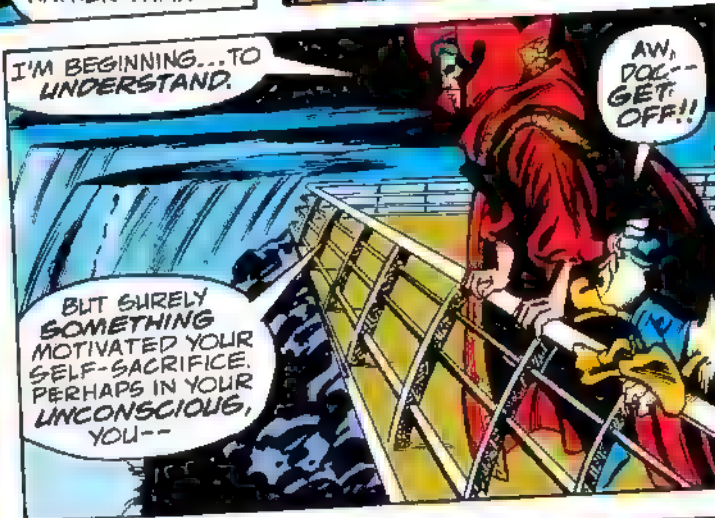
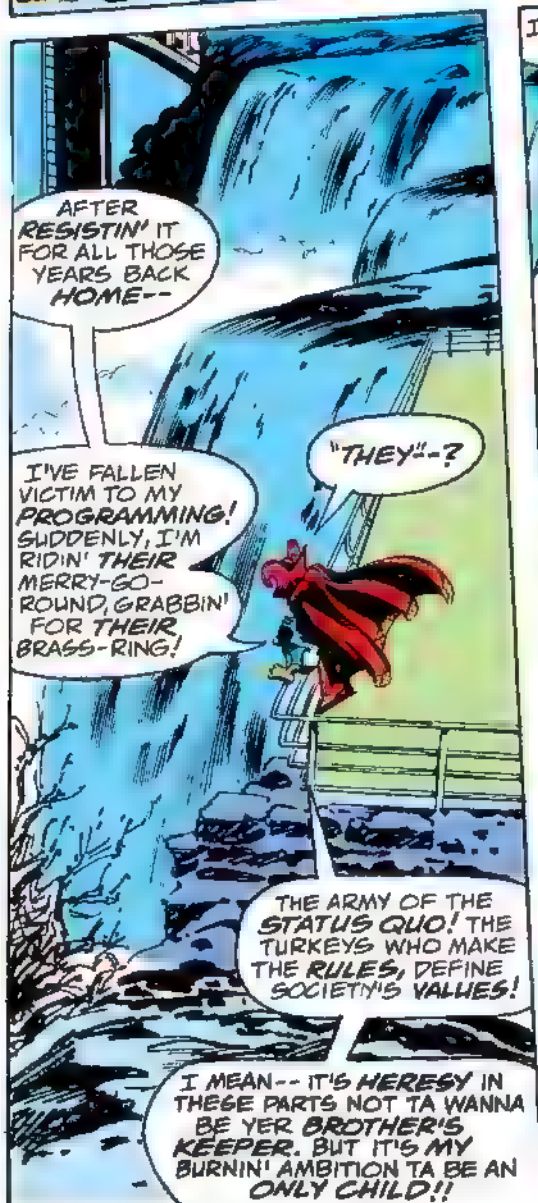
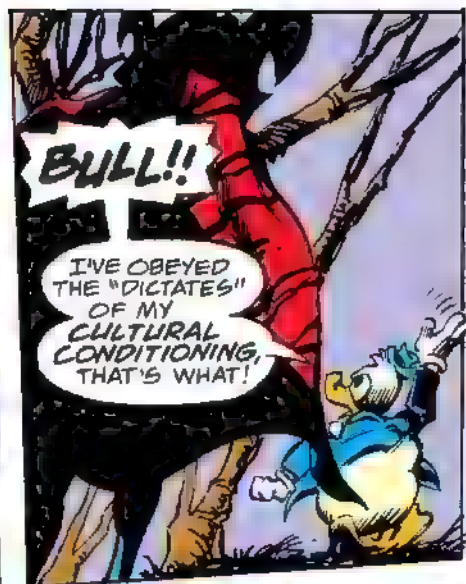
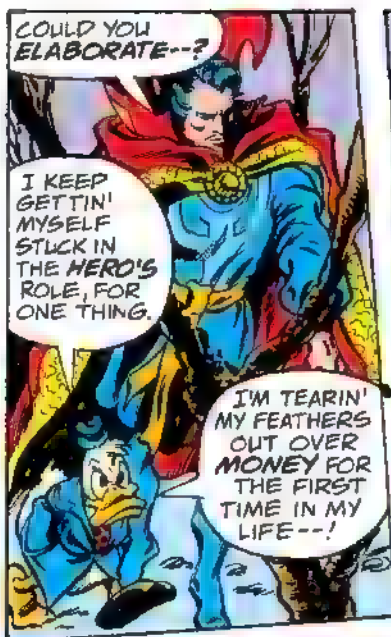
IF YOU'D CARE TO
DISCUSS IT, MINE
ARE SYMPATHETIC
EARS.

STATE IT,
THEN. PERHAPS
TOGETHER WE
MIGHT
FORMULATE A
SOLUTION.

WHAT'S TO DISCUSS?
I'M NOT AS DUMB AS
I LOOK, CHUM. I
KNOW WHAT THE
PROBLEM IS.

TO THE
FALLS

OKAY: SINCE
I CAME TO
THIS IDIOT
WORLD,
I'VE BEEN
BEHAVING
COMPLETELY
CONTRARY
TO MY TRUE
NATURE.





YOUR PRESIDENTIAL
CANDIDACY--YOUR FEIGNED
ROLE AS OUTCAST--YOUR
WHOLE LIFE HAS BEEN A
SORDID PLOT--

--TO ROB
THE WORLD OF
ITS HEALTHY
KIDNEYS!!

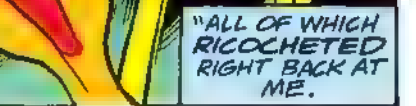
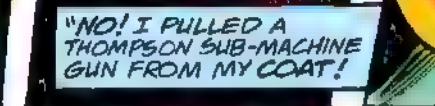
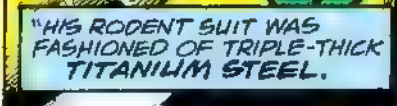
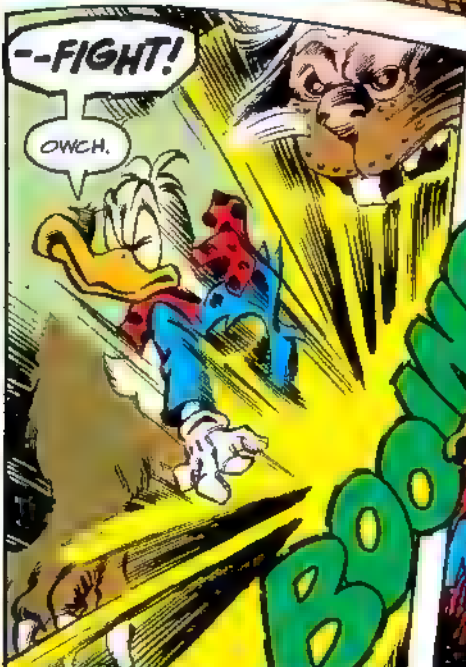
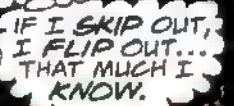
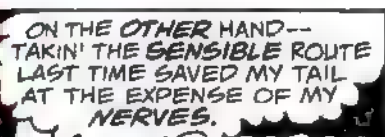
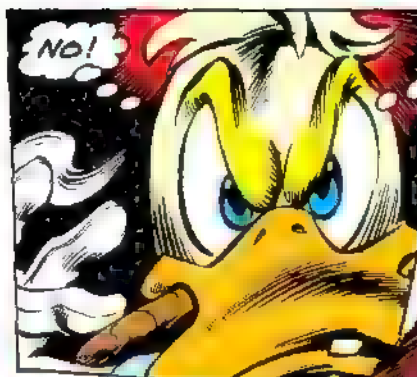
BOOM

"I MANAGED TO DODGE
THE BLOW-- BUT THE
KIDNEY LADY'S CANE
STRUCK THE CLIFFSIDE
SO HARD--

"---IT FISSURED! AND
UP FROM THE STEAMY
BOWELS OF THE EARTH
CLAWED LE BEAVER,
THE CRAZY OLD
CANADIAN IN THE SUPER-
POWERED EXOSKELETON
WHO SABOTAGED MY
PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN
AND BLACKENED MY
NAME!

"AN' NOW THE
MOMENT OF
DECISION
HAD ARRIVED
AGAIN!"

"LE BEAVER-- THE ONLY FIGHT I'D EVER
WALKED OUT ON-- 'CAUSE IT WAS
JUST TOO LUDICROUS!

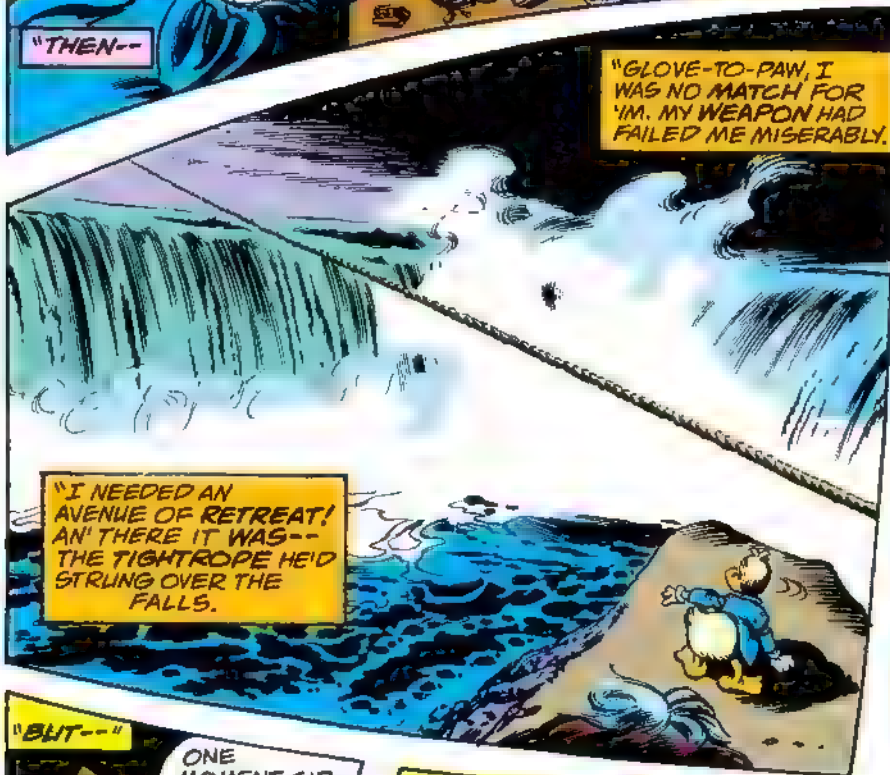




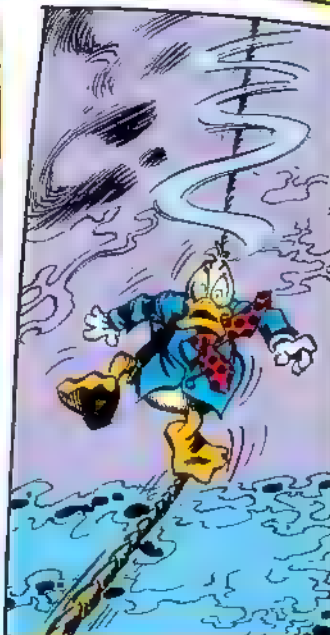
CRUNCH

"THEN--"

"GLOVE-TO-PAW I WAS NO MATCH FOR 'IM. MY WEAPON HAD FAILED ME MISERABLY."



"I NEEDED AN AVENUE OF RETREAT! AN' THERE IT WAS-- THE TIGHTROPE HE'D STRUNG OVER THE FALLS."



"IT SHOULD'A WORKED. I SHOULD'A BEEN ABLE TO MAKE IT BACK TO CANADA, CATCH MY BREATH, AN' DEVISE A NEW PLAN OF ATTACK."

"BUT--"

ONE MOMENT, SIR. A FEW QUESTIONS.

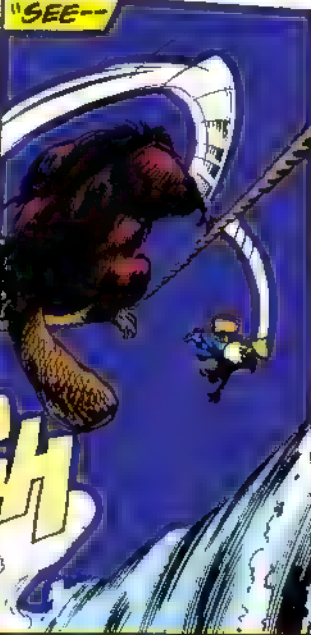
CARRYING ANY FIREARMS? LIQUOR? HOW LONG WILL YOU BE STAYING IN CANADA? WHAT--

"SO I LEARNED A VERY SIMPLE LESSON THE HARD WAY."



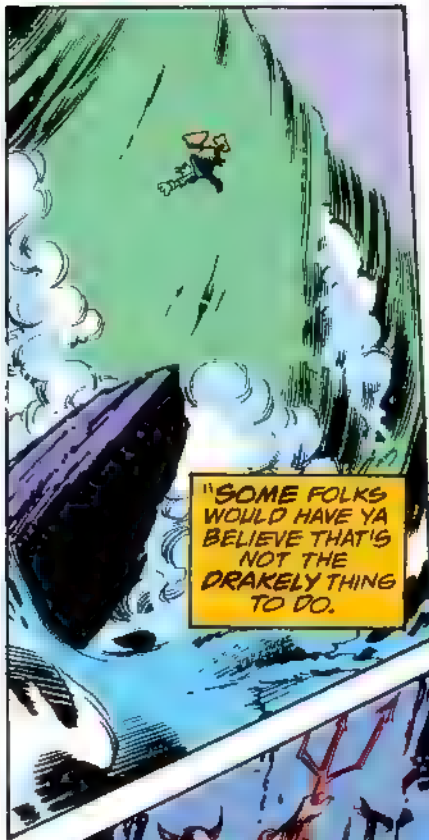
WAAUGH

"SEE--"



"MY HEAD WAS THROBBIN', MY NERVES WERE SHOT BECAUSE FOR ONCE I'D HEEDED MY BETTER JUDGMENT --AN RUN AWAY."

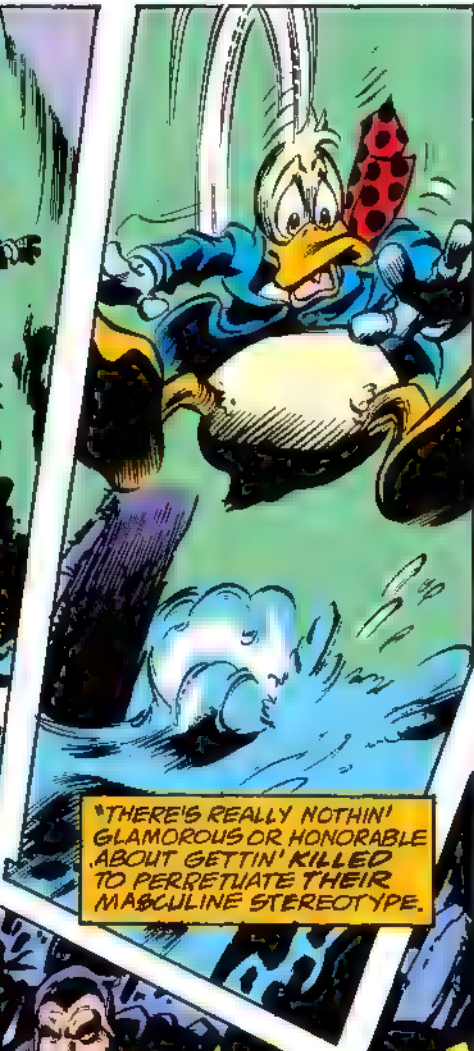
"--I FORGOT I'D HAVE'TA PASS CUSTOMS!"



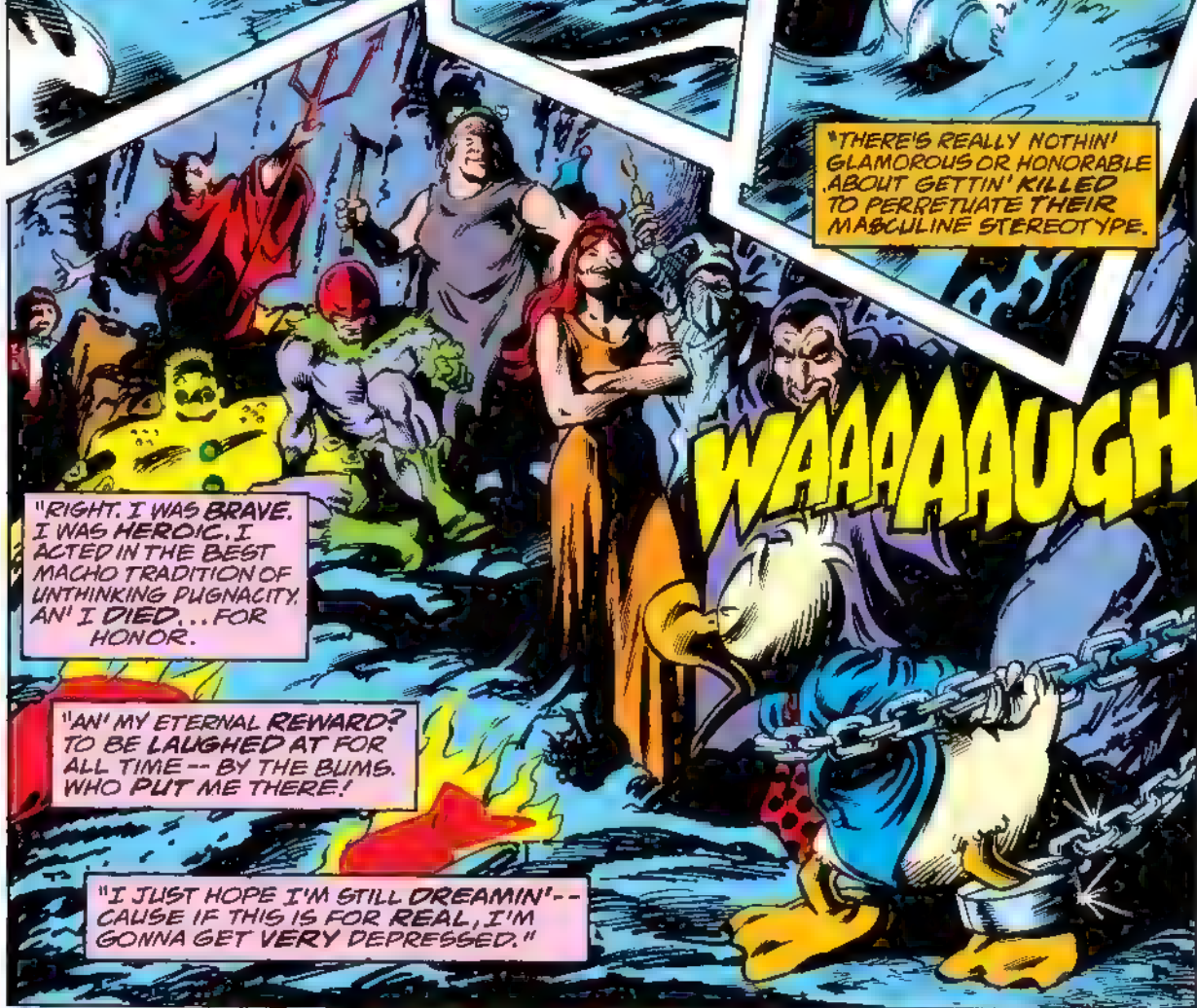
"SOME FOLKS
WOULD HAVE YA
BELIEVE THAT'S
NOT THE
DRAKELY THING
TO DO."



"WHAT THEY DON'T
TELL YA, THOUGH--"



"THERE'S REALLY NOTHIN'
GLAMOROUS OR HONORABLE
ABOUT GETTIN' KILLED
TO PERRETUATE THEIR
MASCULINE STEREOTYPE."



"RIGHT. I WAS BRAVE.
I WAS HEROIC. I
ACTED IN THE BEST
MACHO TRADITION OF
UNTHINKING PUGNACITY.
AN' I DIED... FOR
HONOR."

"AN' MY ETERNAL REWARD?
TO BE LAUGHED AT FOR
ALL TIME -- BY THE BUMS.
WHO PUT ME THERE!"

"I JUST HOPE I'M STILL DREAMIN'--
CAUSE IF THIS IS FOR REAL, I'M
GONNA GET VERY DEPRESSED."

WAAAAAUGH

QUACK-UP!!

HOWARD
THE DUCK

MARVEL COMICS GROUP

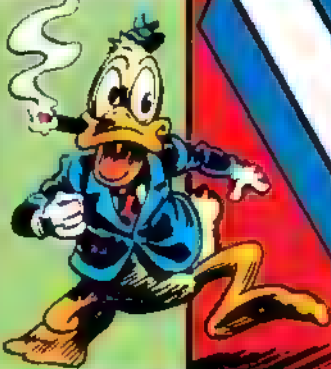
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TRAPPED IN A WORLD HE NEVER MADE!

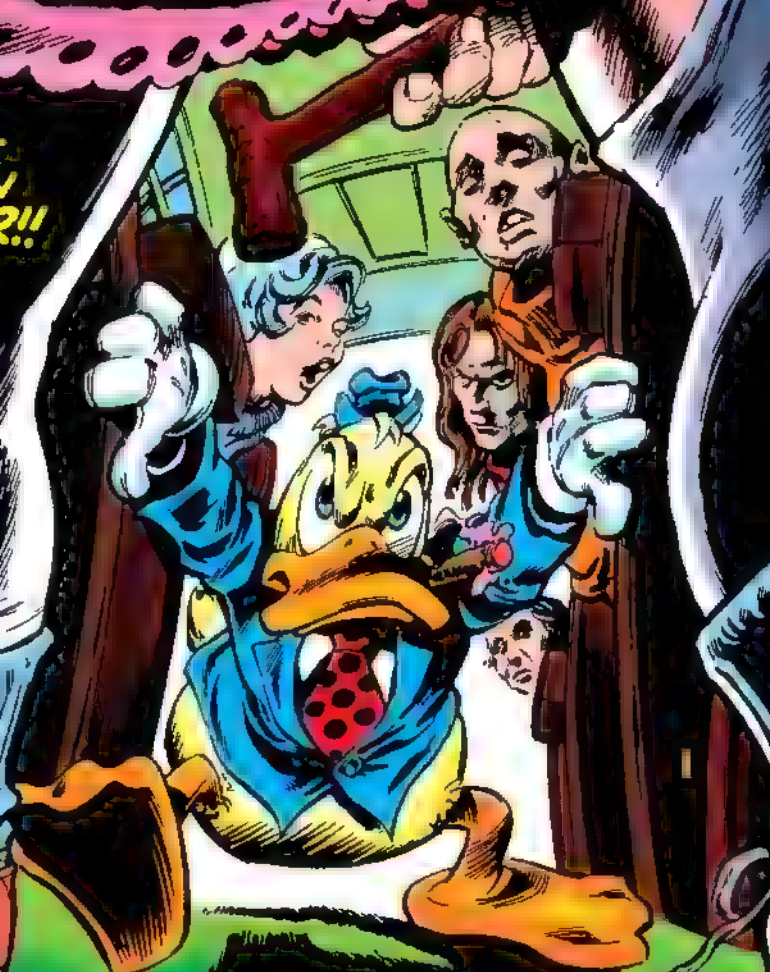
HOWARD THE DUCK

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IT BEGAN
AS CHEAP
TRANSPOR-
TATION--

--BUT IT
ENDED IN
DISASTER!!



BUS TO OBLIVION!

COLON • LEALORA

From the time of his hatching, he was... different. A potentially brilliant scholar who dreaded the structured environment of school, he educated himself in the streets, taking whatever work was available, formulating his philosophy of self from what he learned of the world about him. And then the Cosmic Axes shifted...and that world *changed*. Suddenly, he was stranded in a universe he could not fathom. Without warning, he became a strange fowl in an even stranger land.

Stan Lee PRESENTS: HOWARD THE DUCK!™

STEVE GERBER
WRITER/EDITOR

GENE COLAN
ARTIST

STEVE LEIALOHA
INKER

JIM NOVAK, LETTERER
JAN COHEN, COLORIST



WELCOME TO THE
P.T.S OF HECK...

...TO WHICH
"H" THE
"D"...

...HAS BEEN
DARNED
FOR ALL
TIME.

OF COURSE,
IT'S ALL JUST
A DREAM...
HENCE THE
LINGUINLY
EUPHEMISMS.

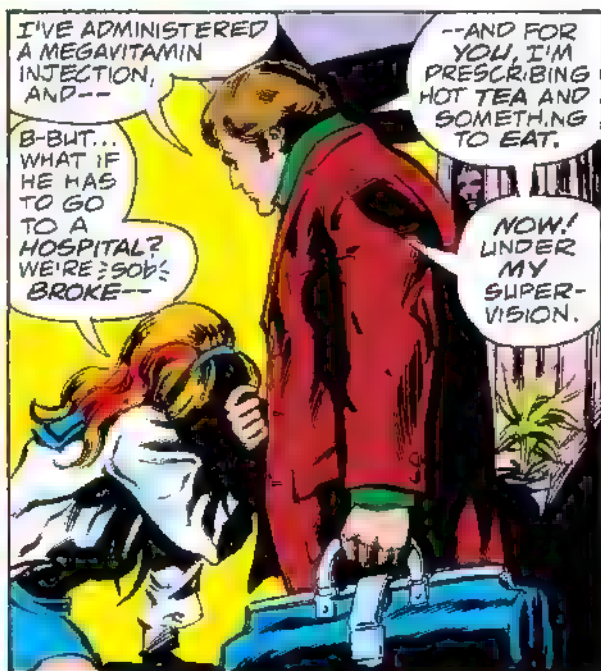
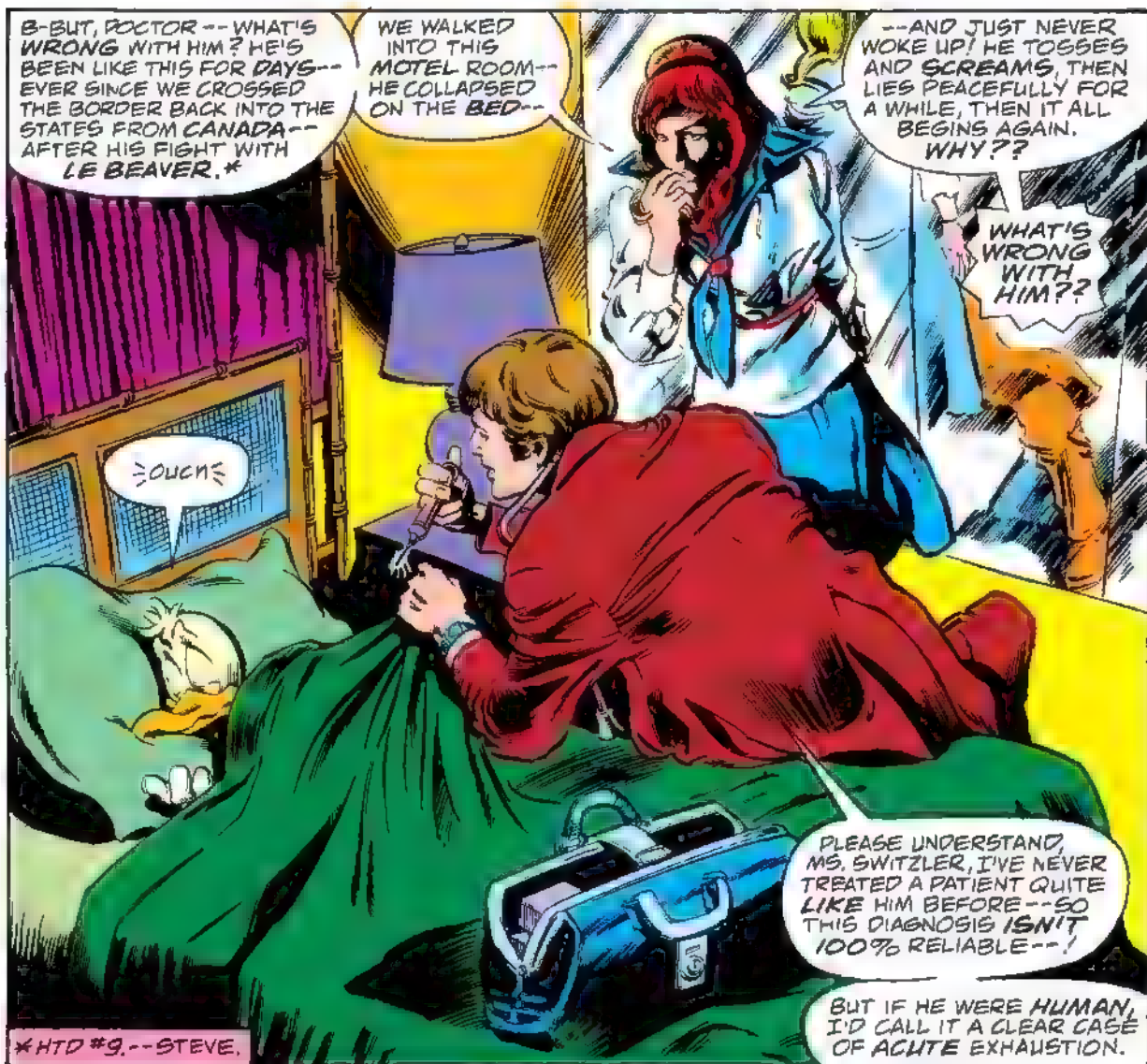
THE MEPHISTO
YOU SAY, SPACE
TURNIP! IT'S ALL
REAL--THE HEAT,
THE HUMILIATION, THE
PRICK OF MY
PITCHFORK!

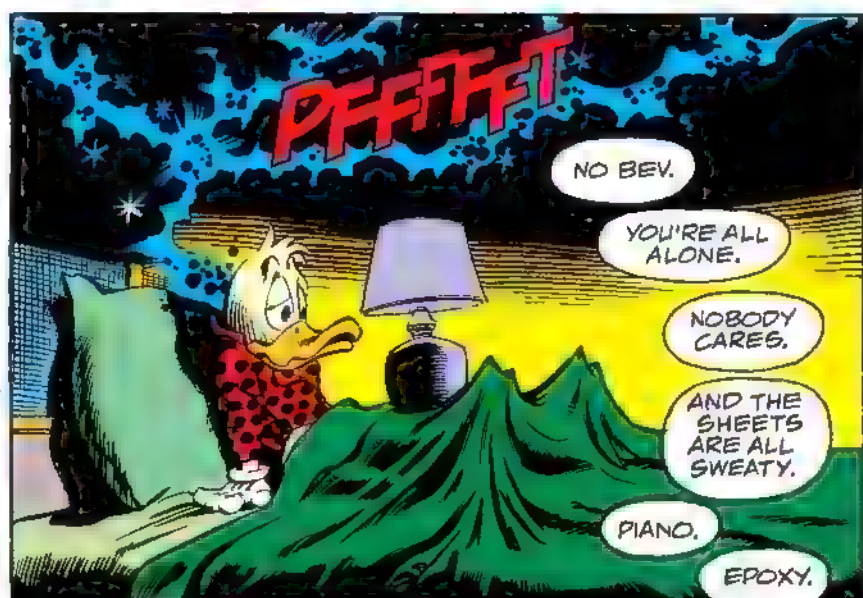
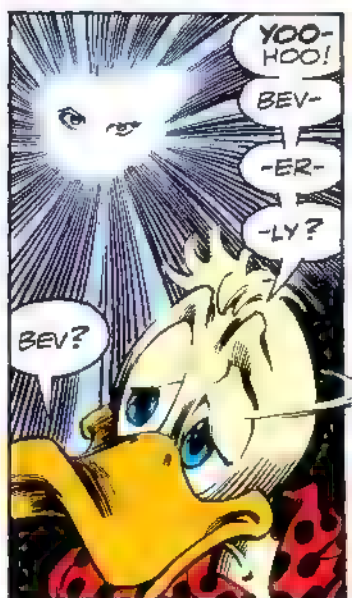
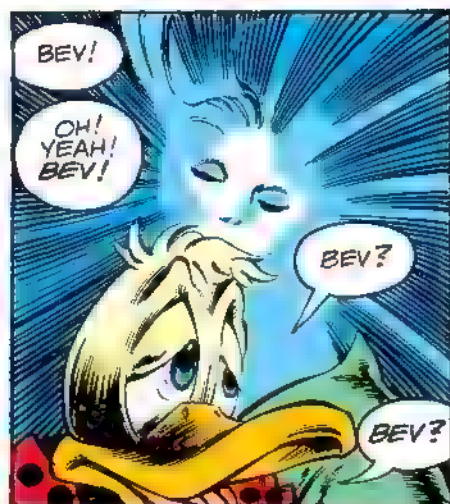
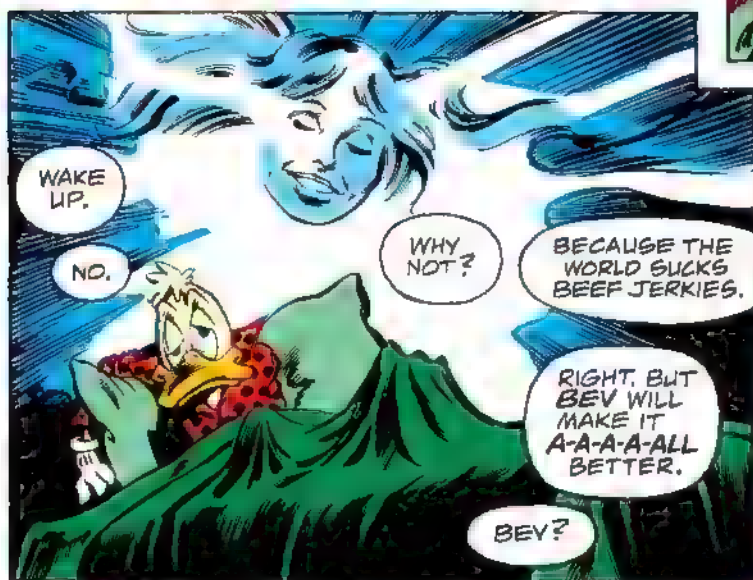
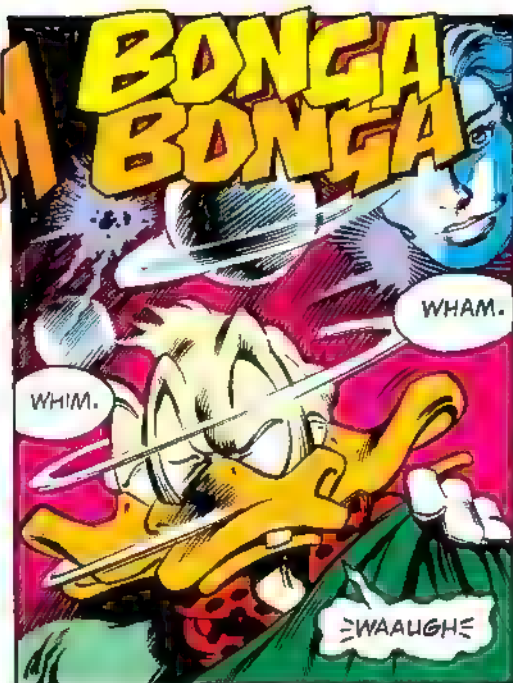
"DREAM" IS
THE MISNOMER.
WHAT WE'VE GOT
HERE IS A
BONA FIDE--

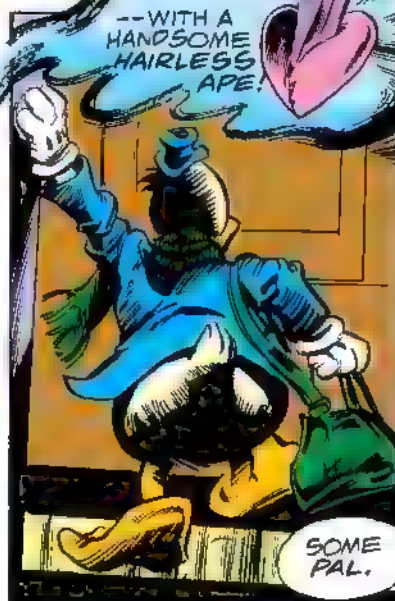
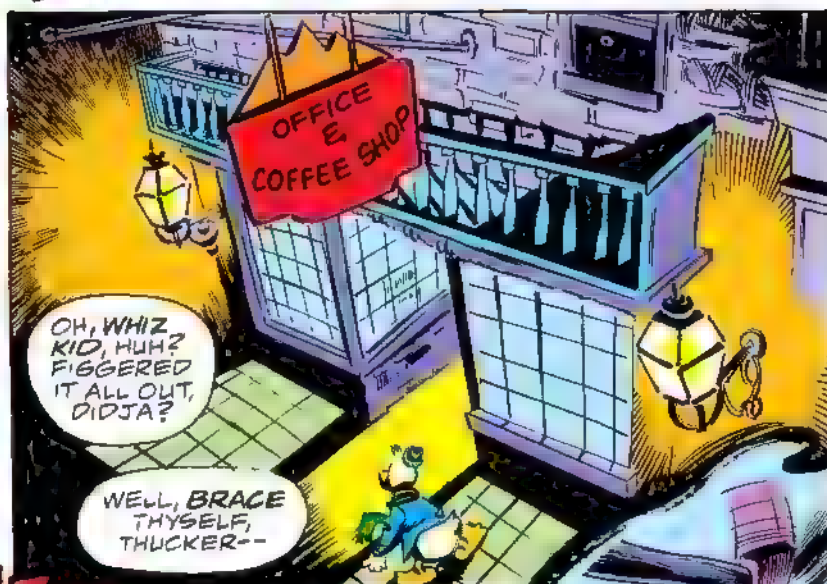
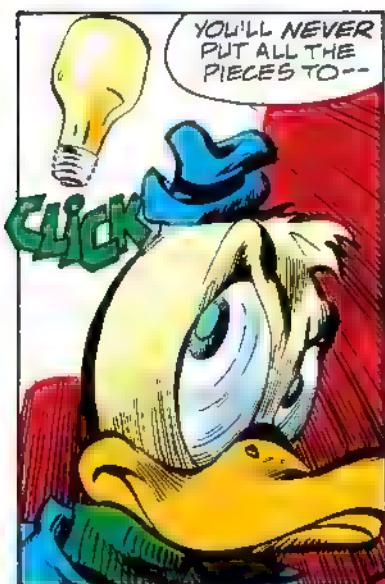
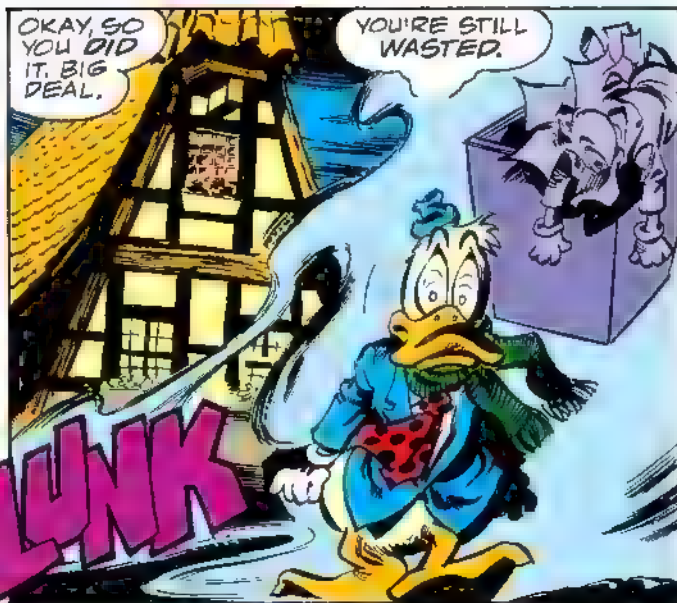
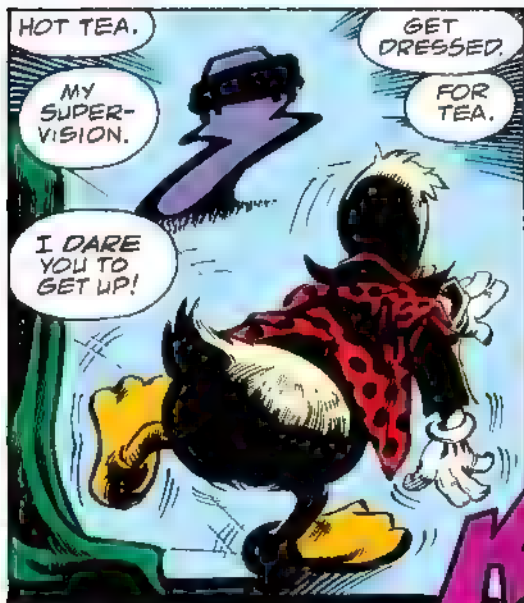
QUACK-UP!

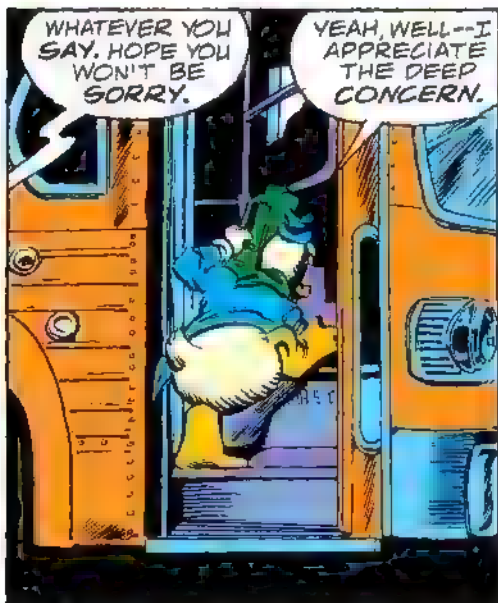
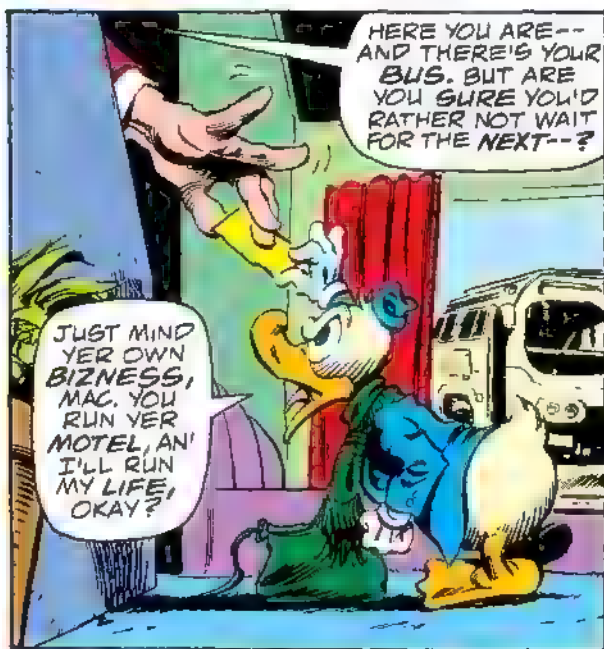
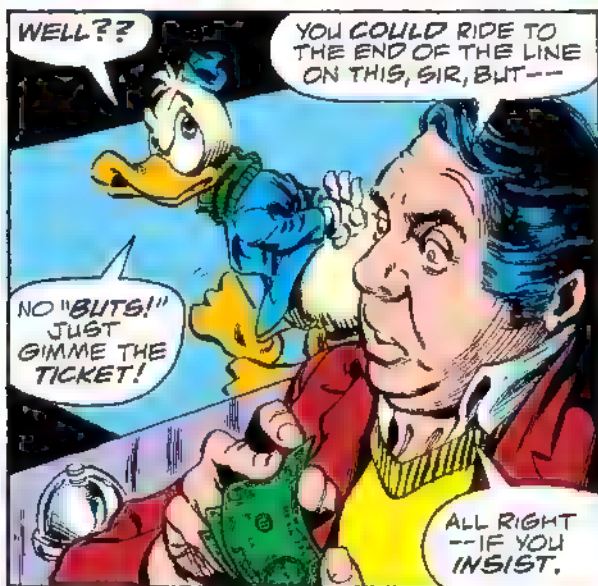
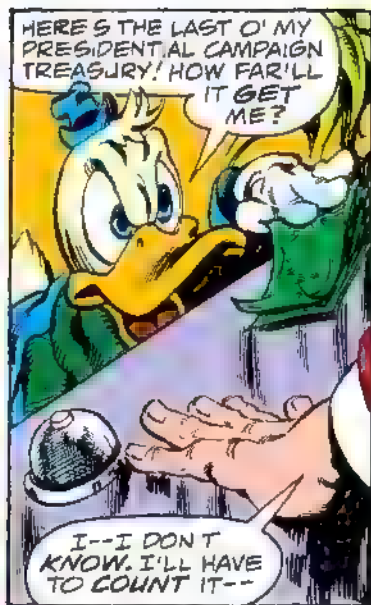
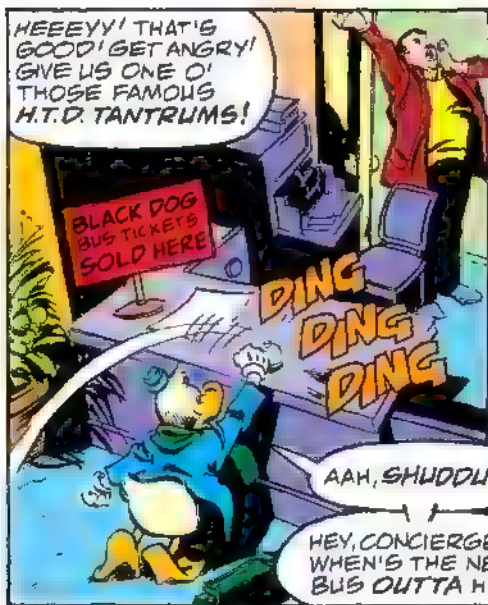
ISN'T THAT SO, HOWARD?

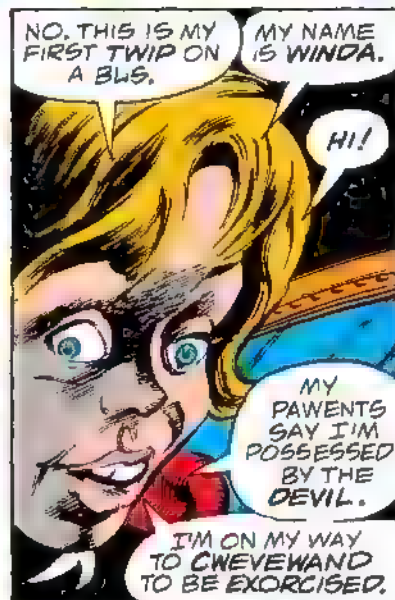
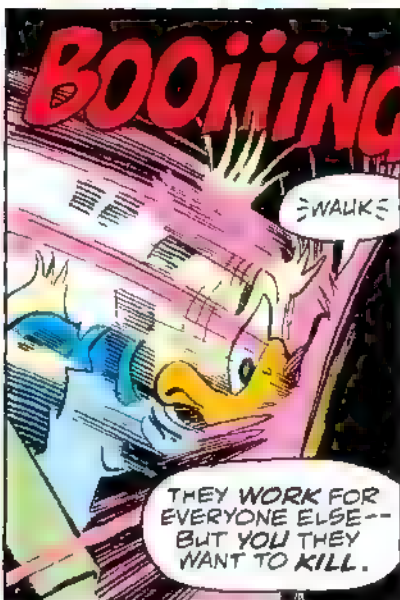
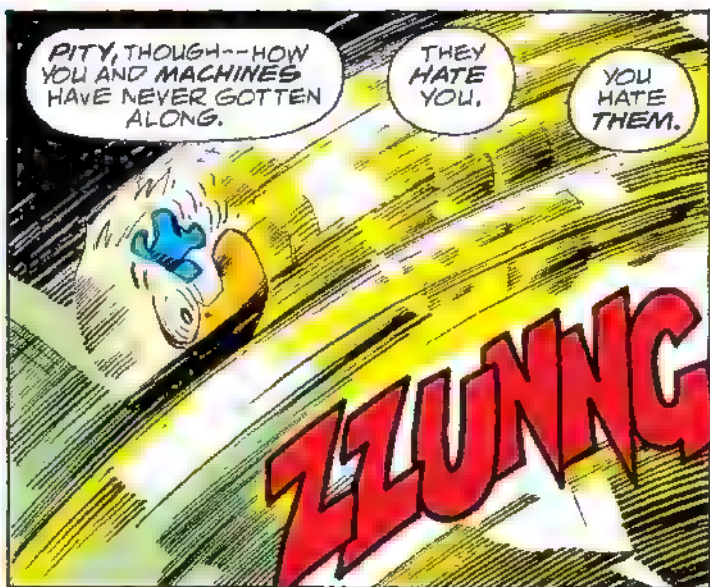
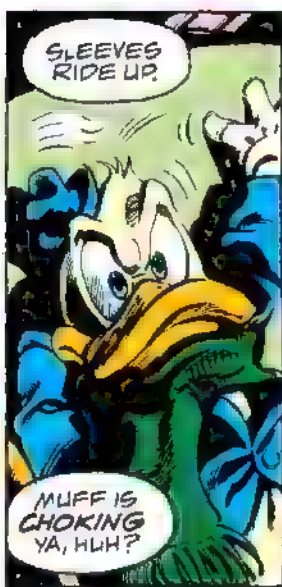
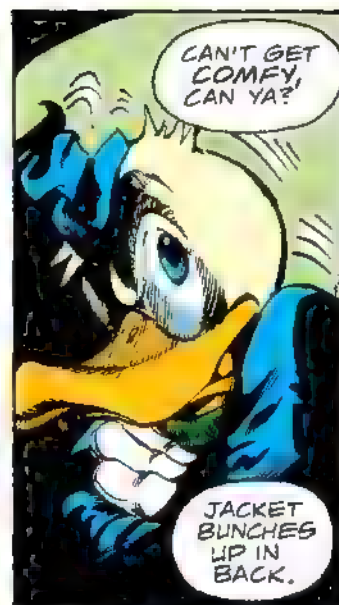
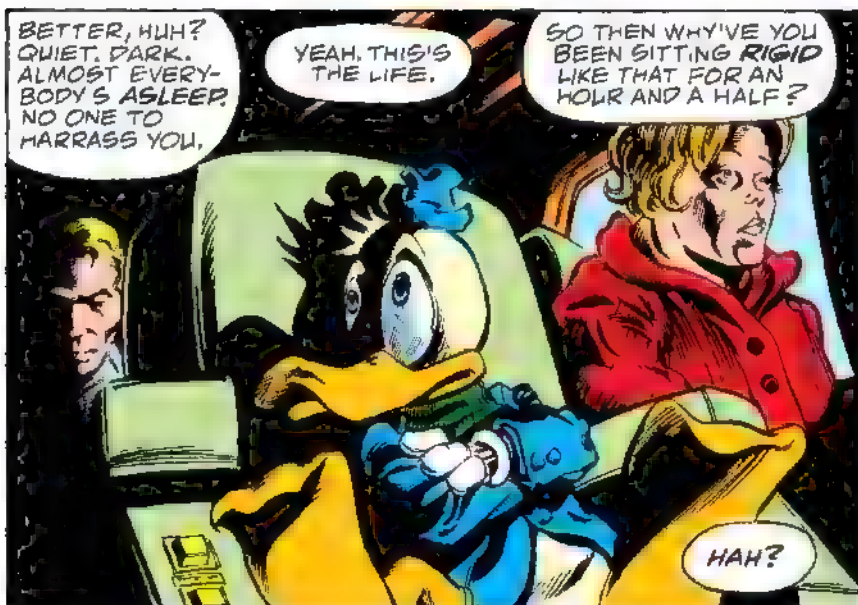
OUCH!

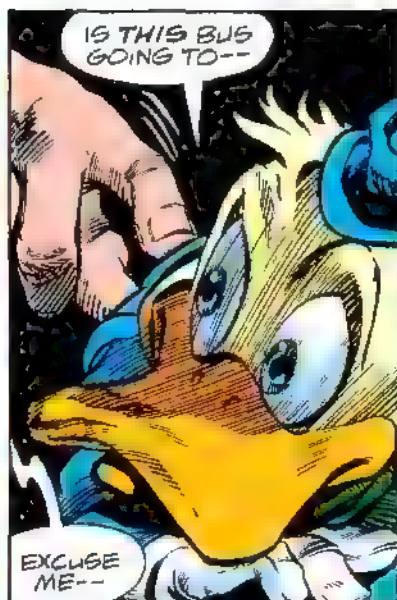


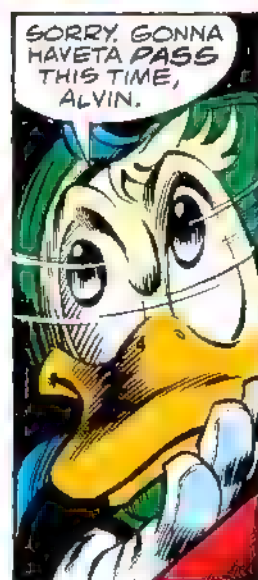




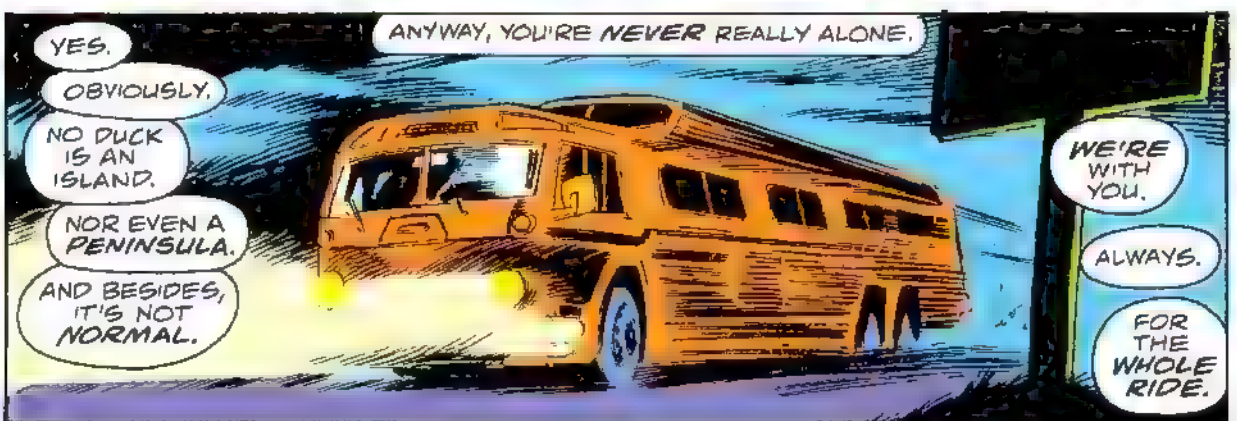
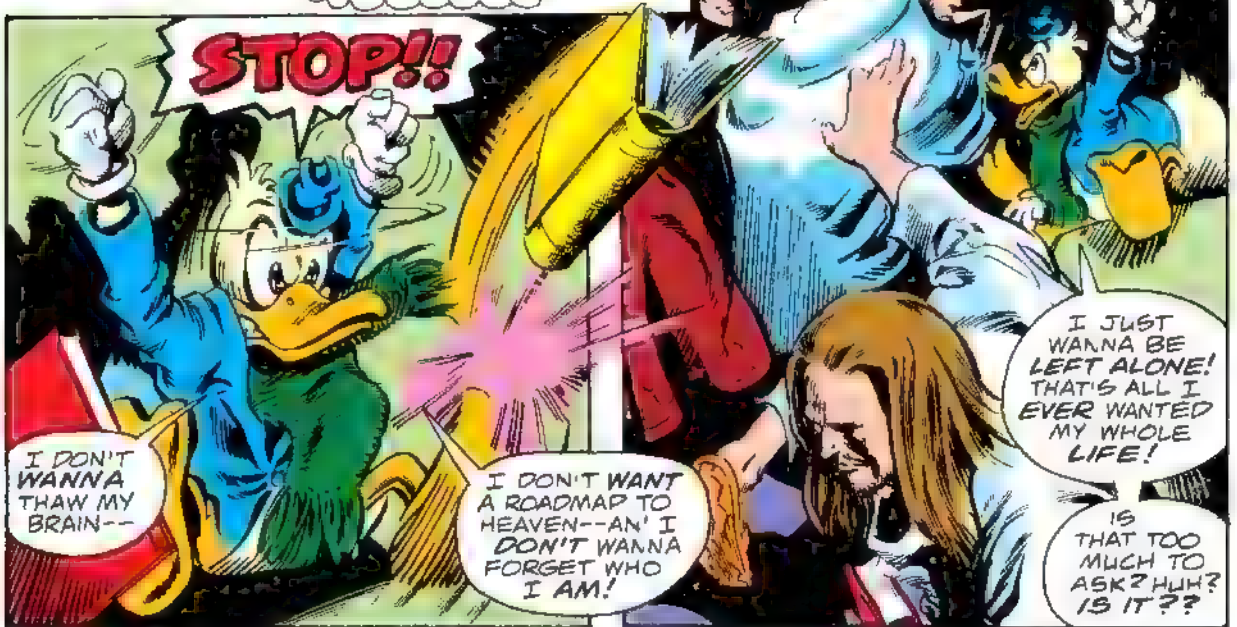


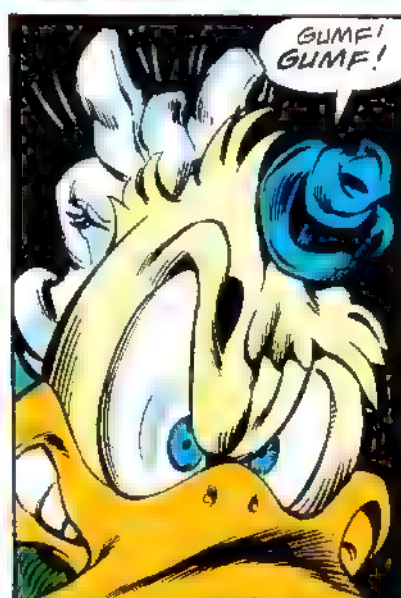
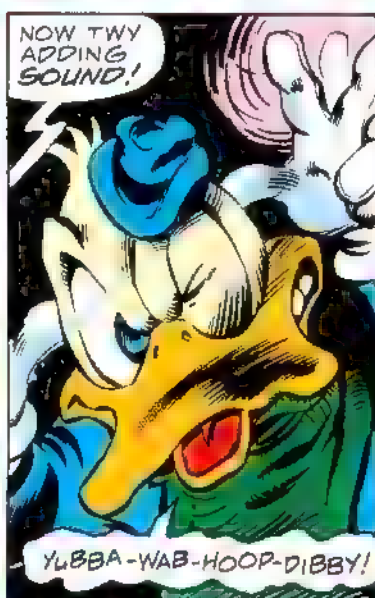
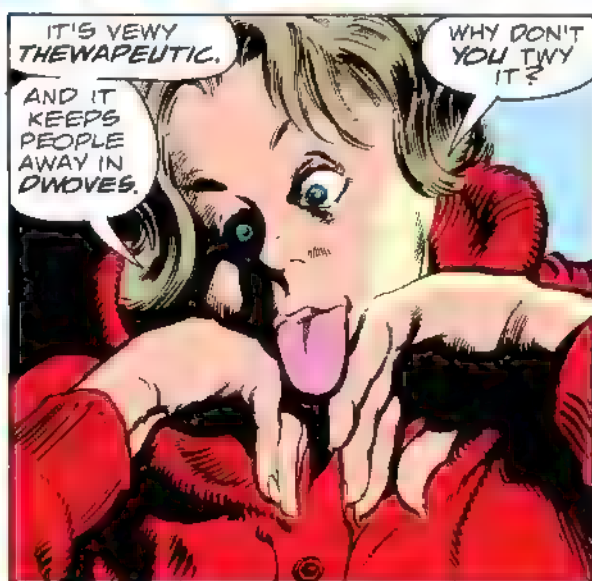
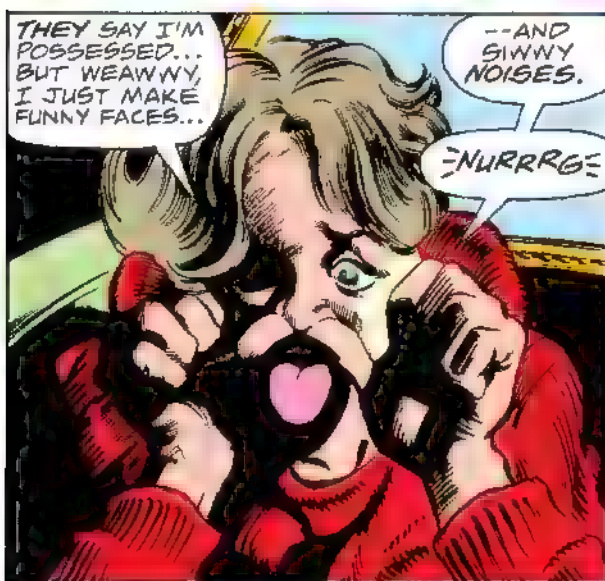
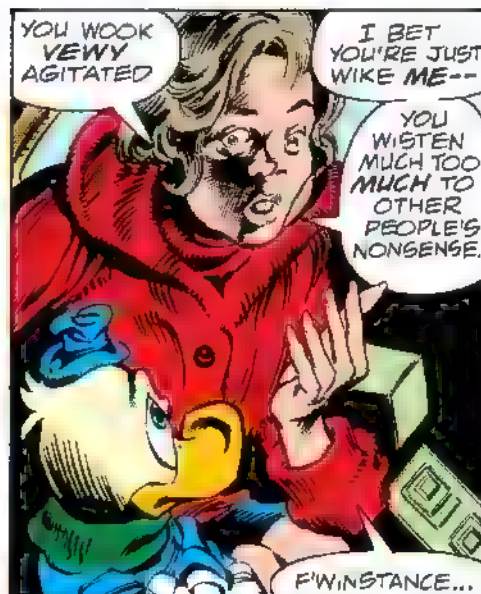
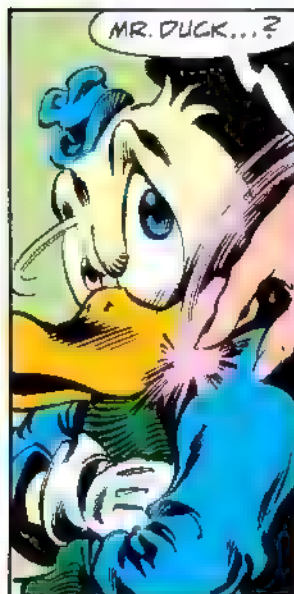
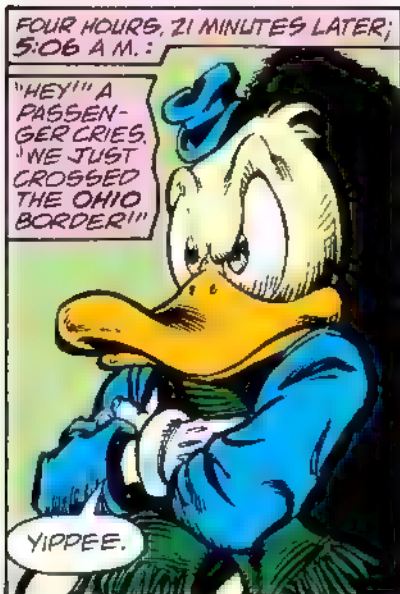


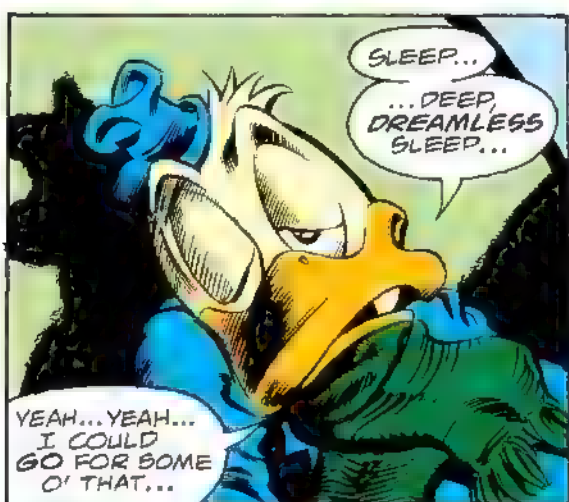
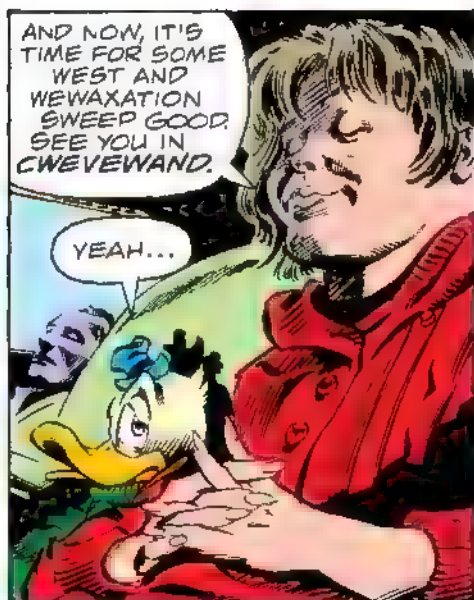




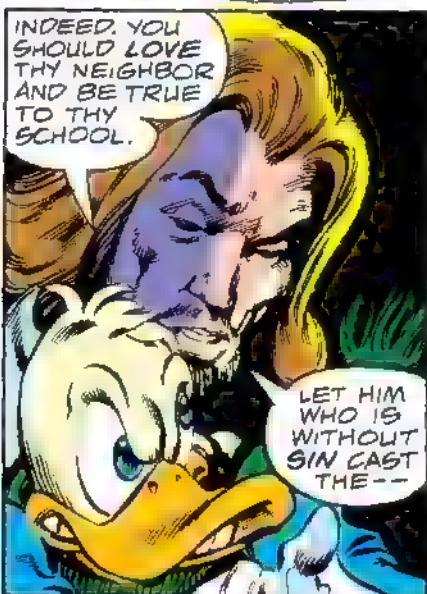
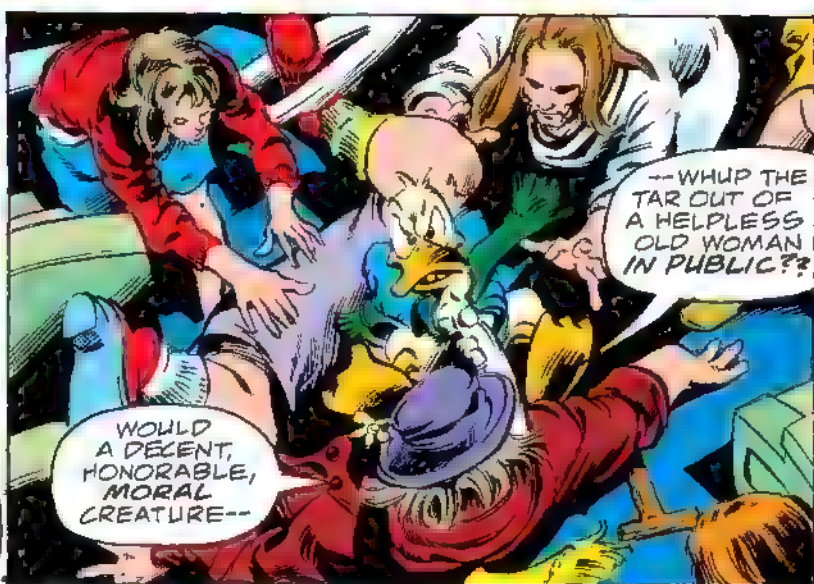
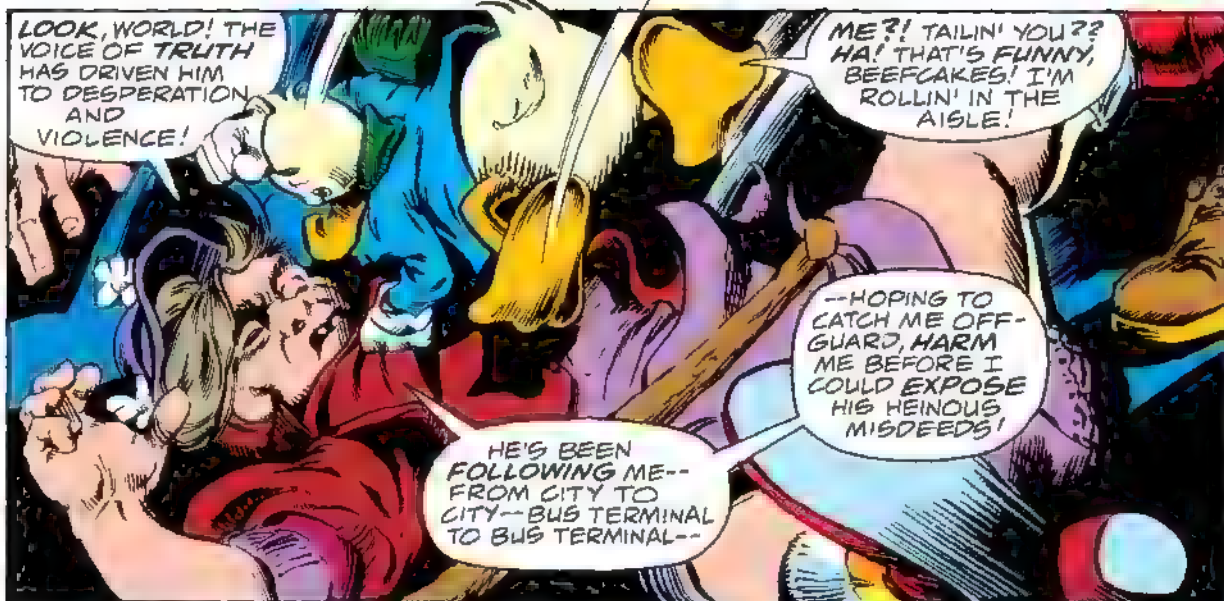




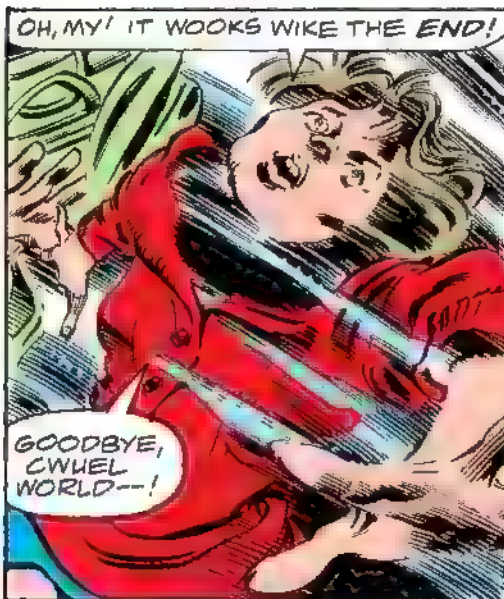












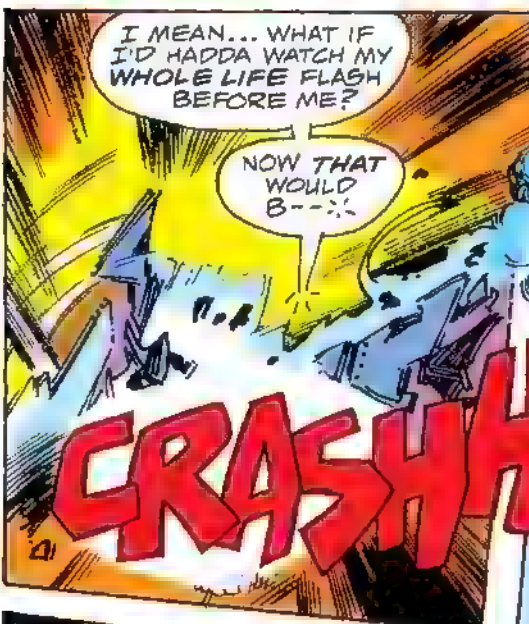
OH, MY! IT LOOKS LIKE THE END!

GOODBYE,
COWEL
WORLD--!

IT FIGURES:
THE LAST SIGHT
I'M GONNA SEE
BEFORE I
DIE--

--IS YOUR
UGLY
FACE!!

AND YET...
IT COULD
BE
WORSE.



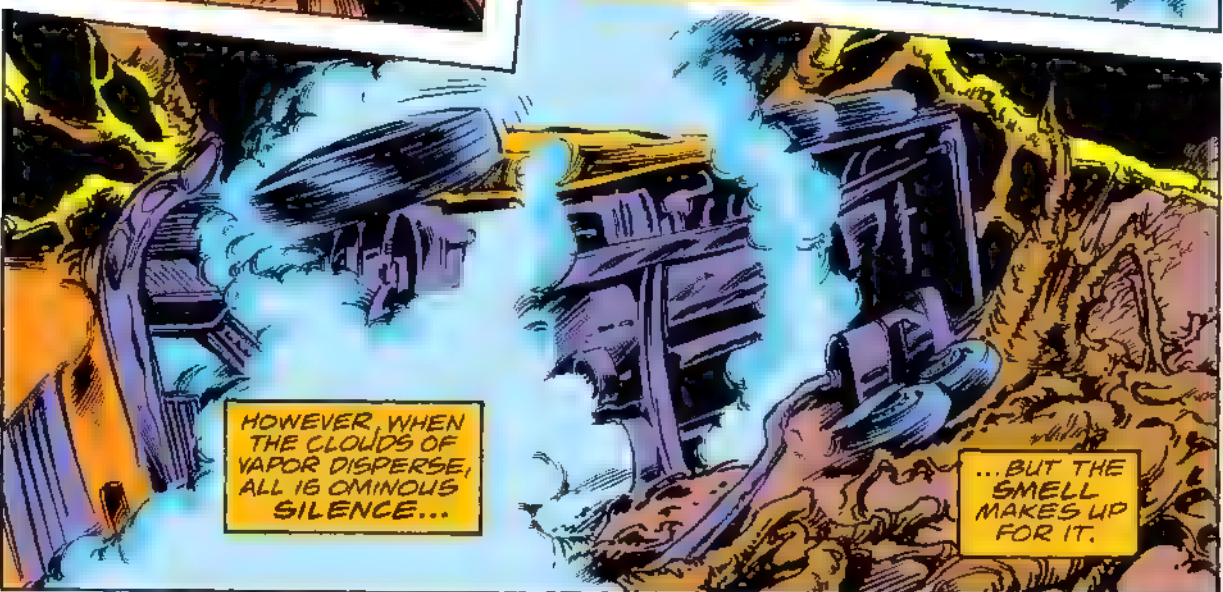
I MEAN... WHAT IF
I'D HADDA WATCH MY
WHOLE LIFE FLASH
BEFORE ME?

NOW THAT
WOULD
B---!

DOES A BUS SCUDDING
OFF THE INTERSTATE
AMID BILLOWS OF DUST
AND SMOKE MAKE A
SOUND IF NO ONE IS
PRESENT TO HEAR IT?

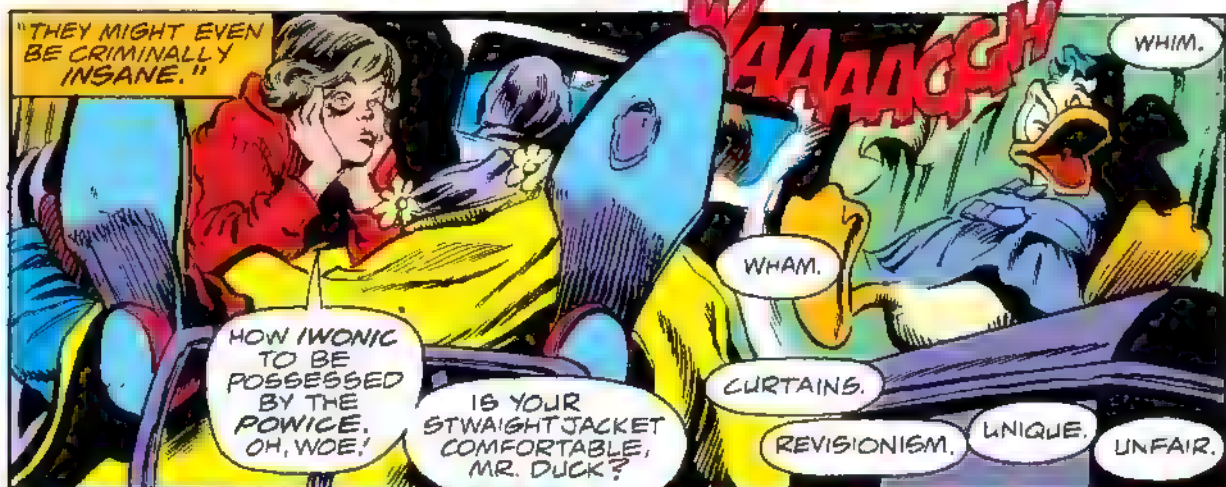
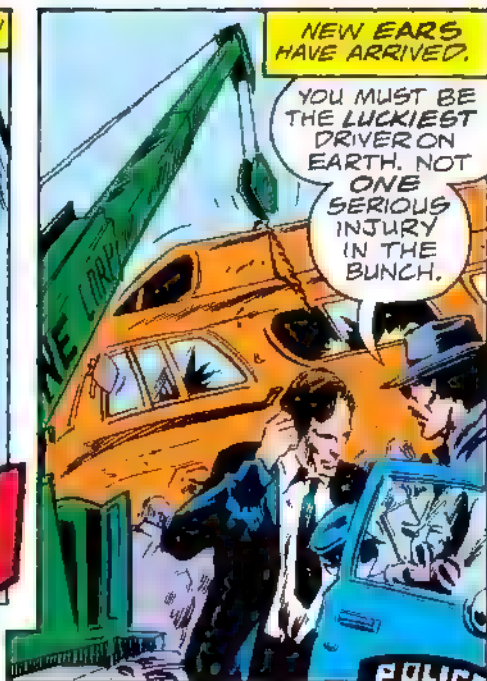
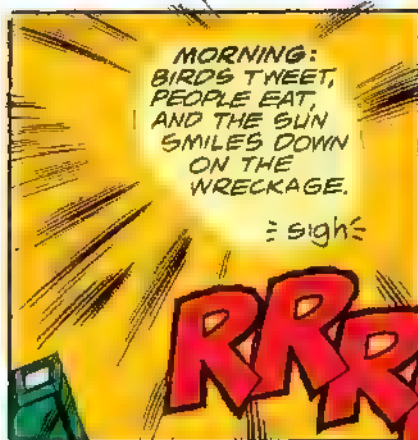
YES.

AND IT'S
DISGUSTING.



HOWEVER, WHEN
THE CLOUDS OF
VAPOR DISPERSE,
ALL IS OMINOUS
SILENCE...

...BUT THE
SMELL
MAKES UP
FOR IT.



NEXT: NIGHTSHIRT CITY!

HOWARD
THE DUCK

MARVEL® COMICS GROUP



30¢ 12
MAY
02415

TRAPPED IN A WORLD HE NEVER MADE!

HOWARD THE DUCK

©1977 MARVEL COMICS GROUP



REMEMBER THE
GOOD OLD DAYS,
HOWARD?

BEFORE
THEY PUT YOU
AWAY...?

THE WORLD
WAS YOUNG...

LOVE WAS
IN BLOOM...

AND YOU
HAD A
MIND
INSTEAD
OF...

DUCK'S HEAD
SOUP!

From the time of his hatching, he was...different. A potentially brilliant scholar who dreaded the structured environment of school, he educated himself in the streets, taking whatever work was available, formulating his philosophy of self from what he learned of the world about him. And then the Cosmic Axis shifted...and that world *changed*. Suddenly, he was stranded in a universe he could not fathom. Without warning, he became a strange fowl in an even stranger land.

Stan Lee PRESENTS: HOWARD THE DUCK!

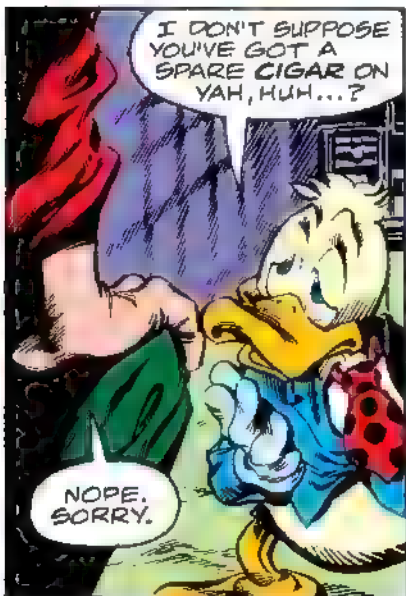
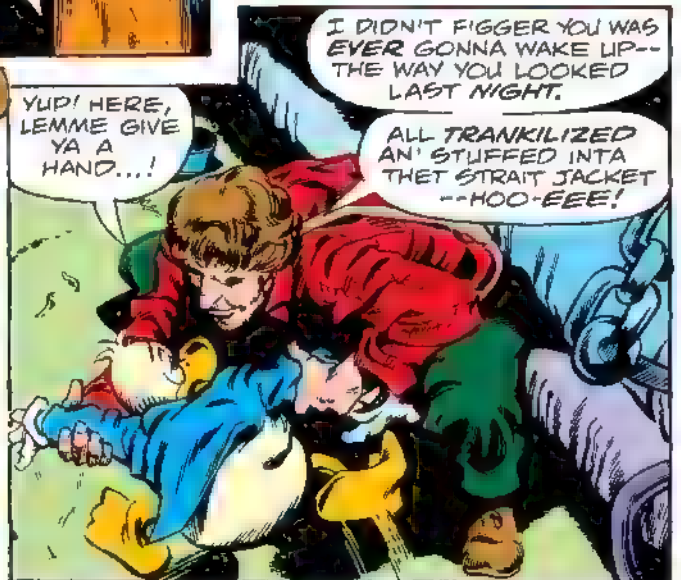
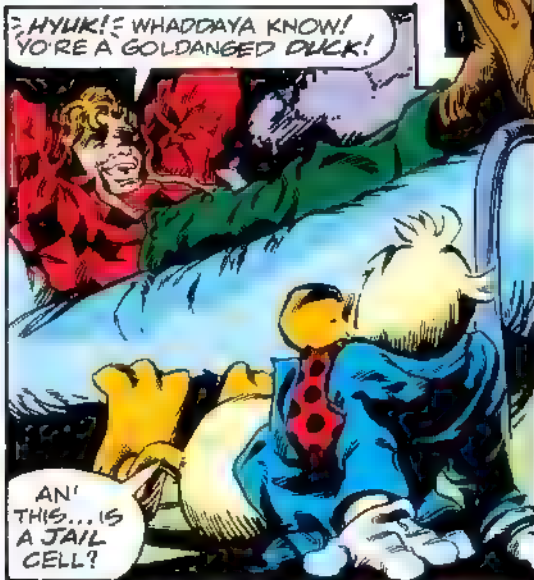
STEVE GERBER
WRITER/EDITOR

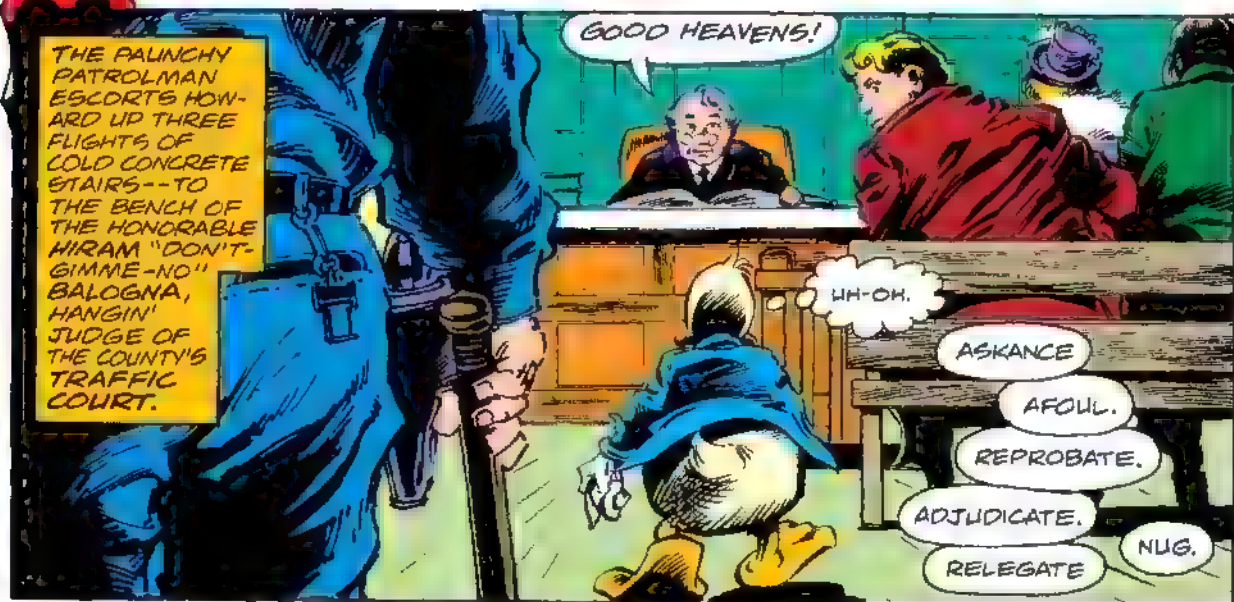
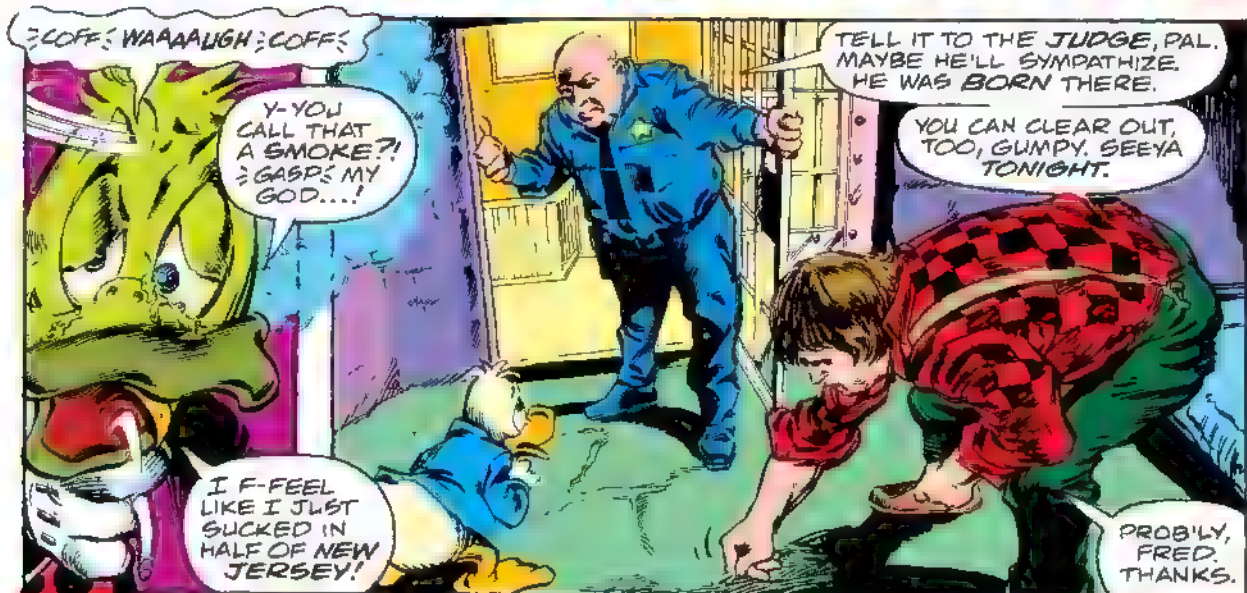
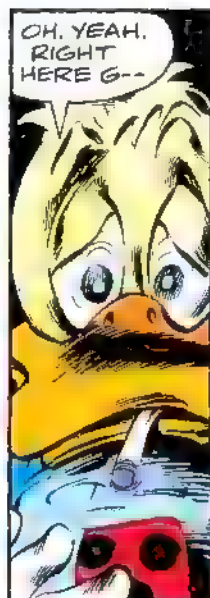
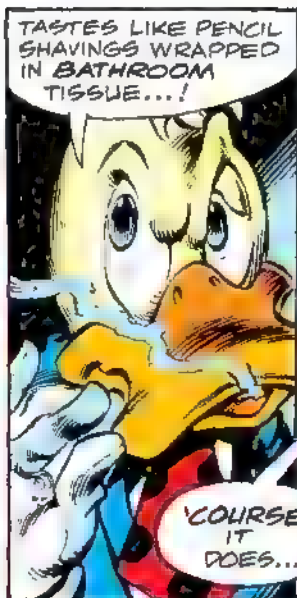
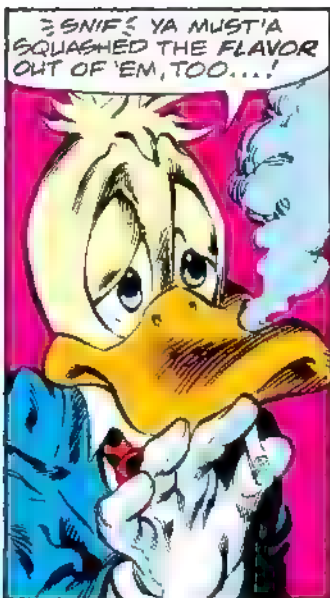
GENE COLAN
ARTIST

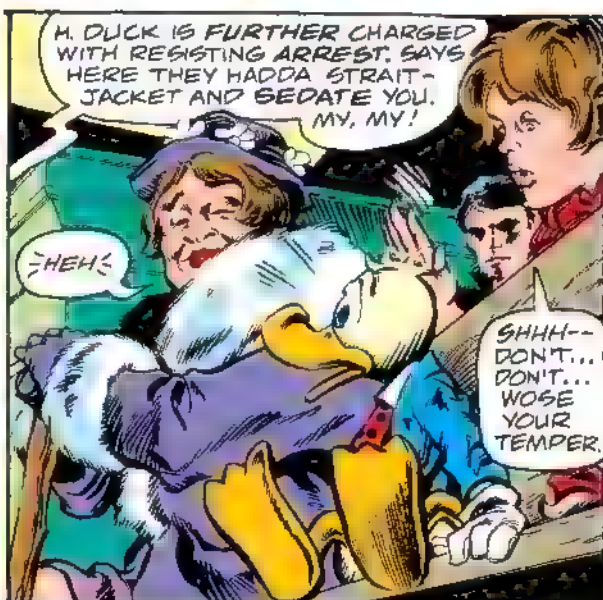
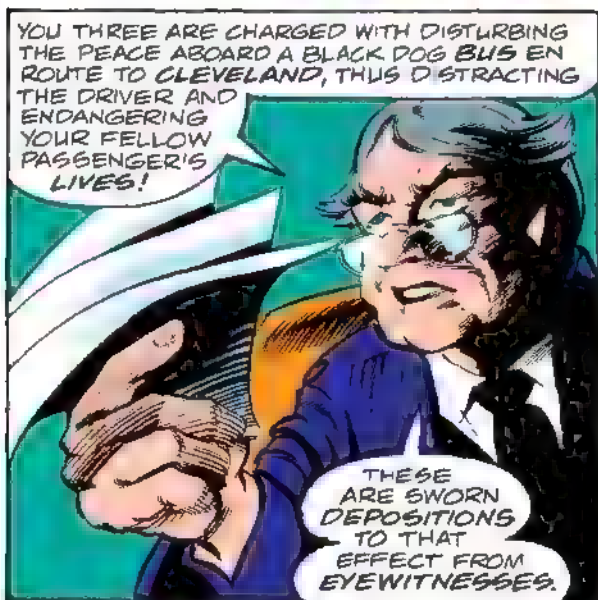
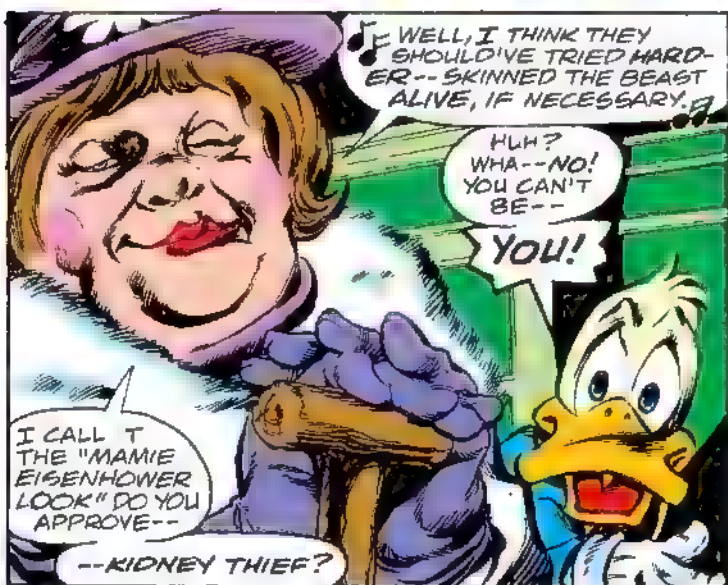
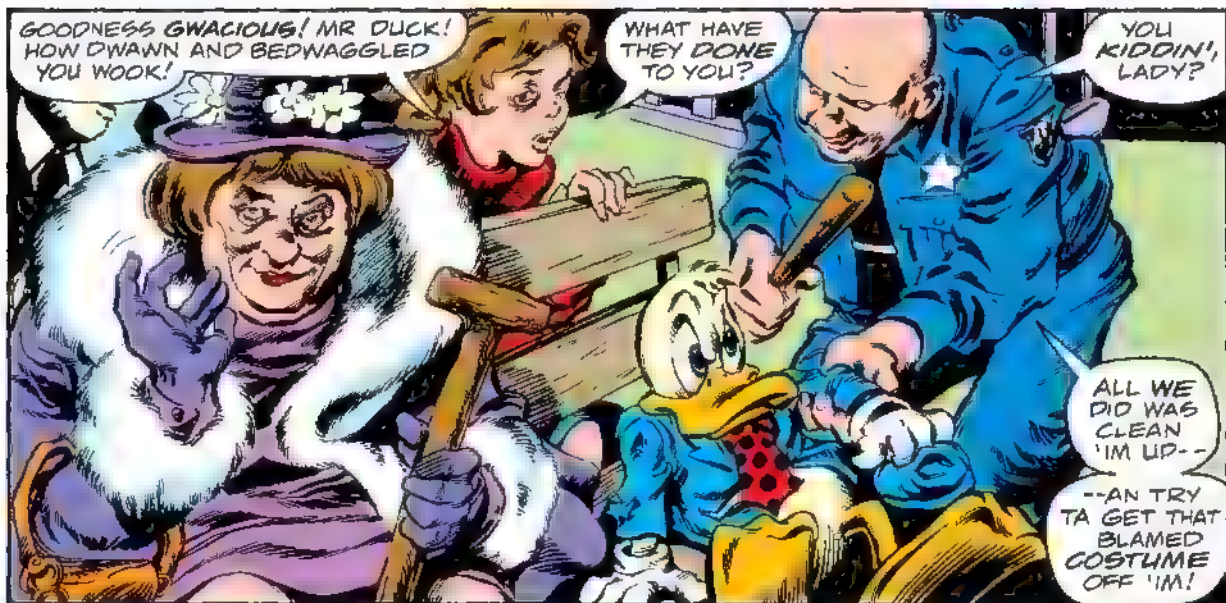
STEVE LEIALOHA
INKER

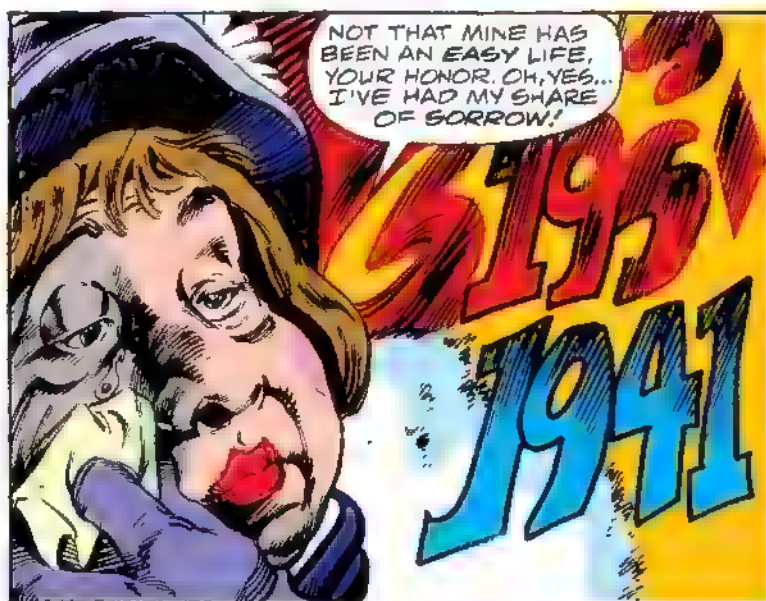
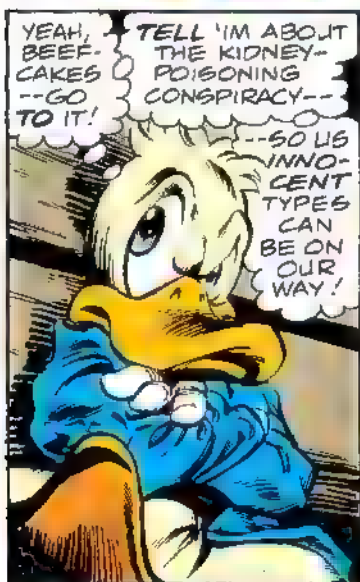
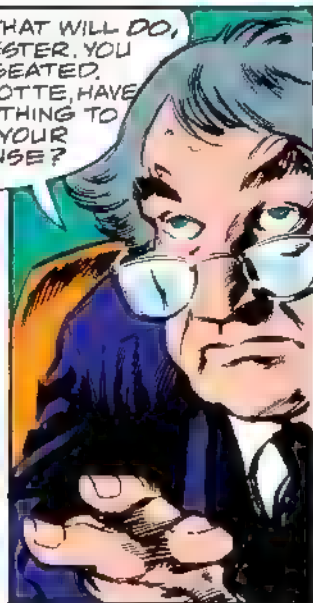
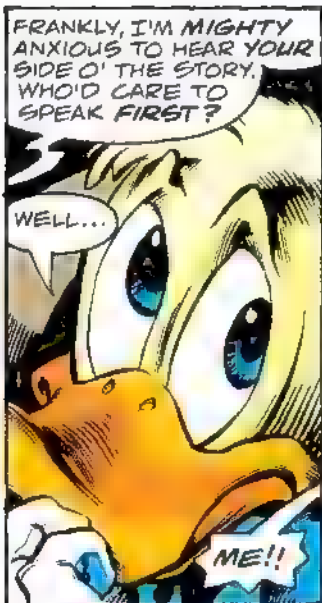
JIM NOVAK, LETTERER
JANICE COHEN, COLORIST

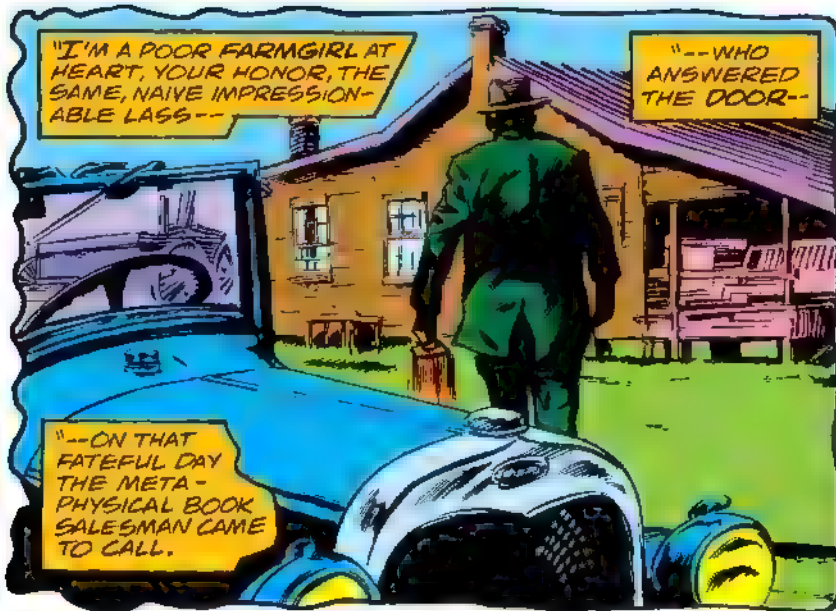












"I'M A POOR FARMGIRL AT HEART, YOUR HONOR, THE SAME, NAIVE IMPRESSION-ABLE LASS--"

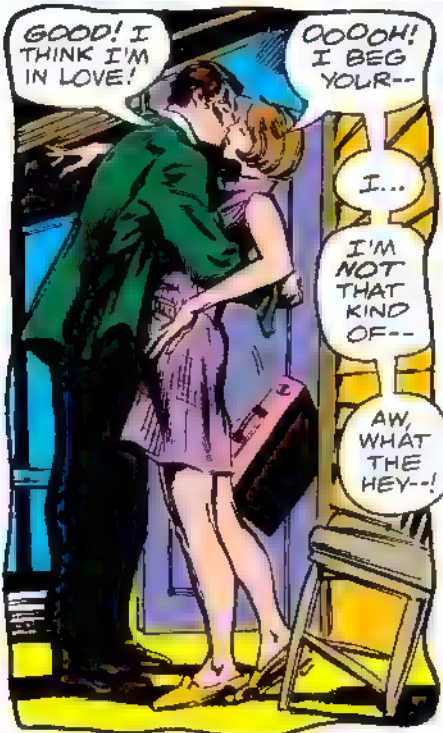
"--WHO ANSWERED THE DOOR--"

"--ON THAT FATEFUL DAY THE META-PHYSICAL BOOK SALESMAN CAME TO CALL."



MR BLOTTE, I REPRESENT -- OH! 'SCUZE ME! YOUR DADDY HOME?

WHY-- NO.



GOOD! I THINK I'M IN LOVE!

OOOOH! I BEG YOUR--

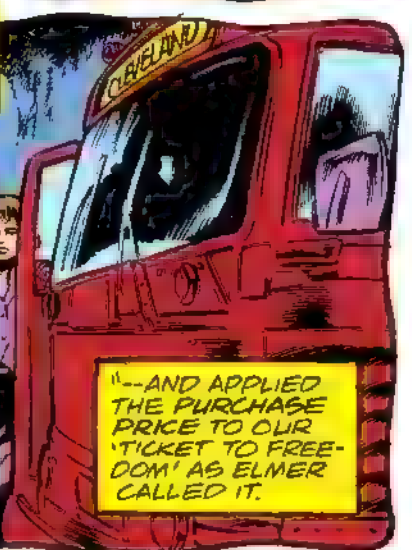
I...

I'M NOT THAT KIND OF--

AW, WHAT THE HEY--!



"BEFORE MY HEAD COULD STOP SPINNING, HE'D SOLD ME A BOOK--AT A GENEROUS DISCOUNT--"



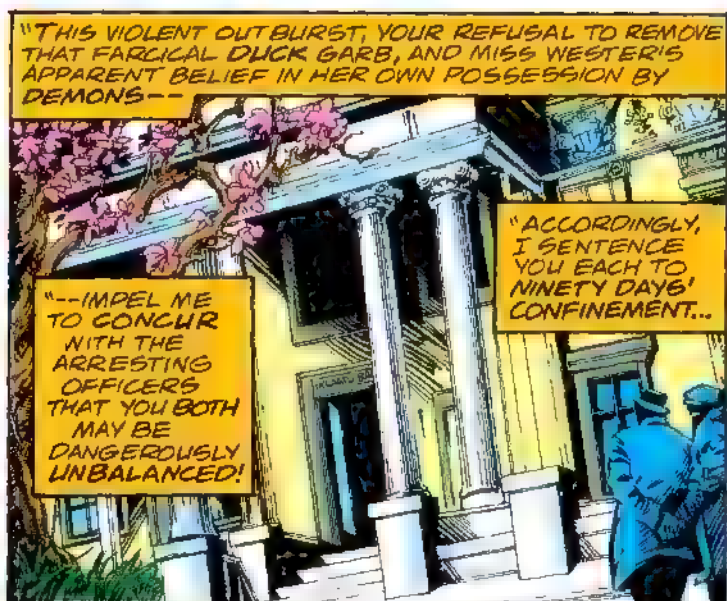
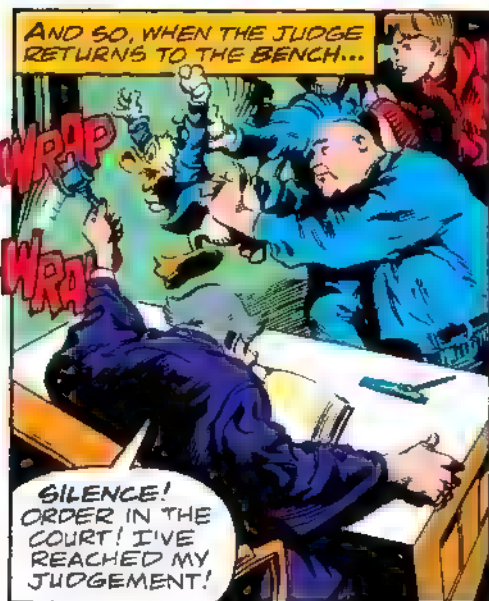
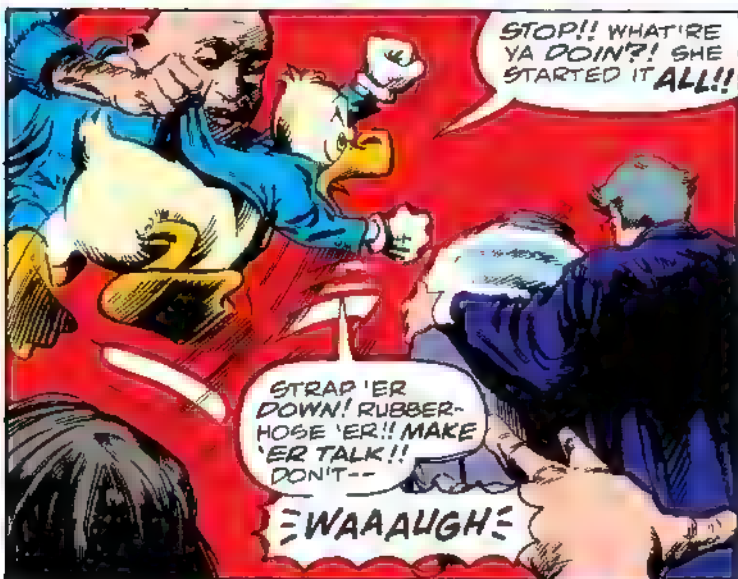
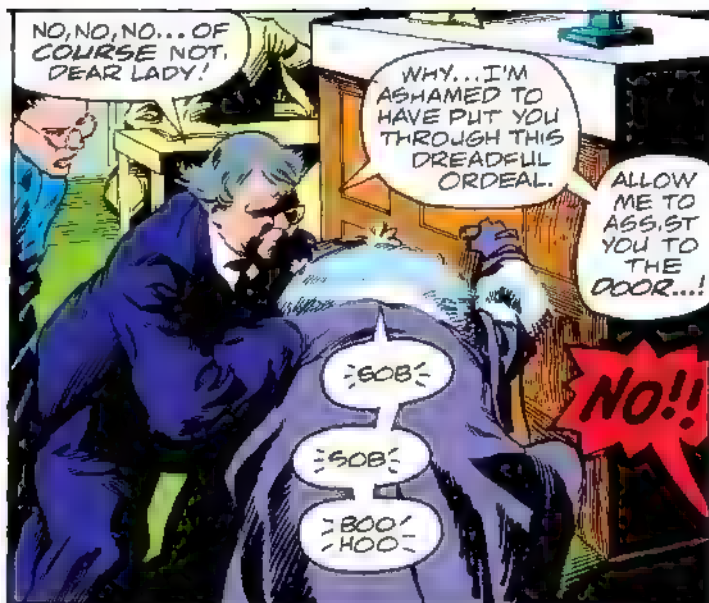
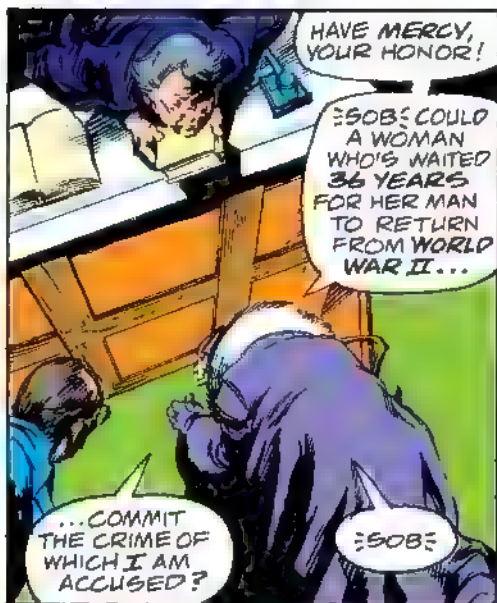
"--AND APPLIED THE PURCHASE PRICE TO OUR 'TICKET TO FREEDOM' AS ELMER CALLED IT."



"CLEVELAND-- THE BIG CITY! BRIGHT LIGHTS, GLAMOR, THE THRILL OF ROMANCE!"

"HE DRAPED ME IN SILKS, PLIED ME WITH FINE WINE...!"

"WE CAVORTED ALL DAY AND DANCED 'TIL DAWN! PLUSH NIGHTCLUBS, GOURMET CUISINE..."

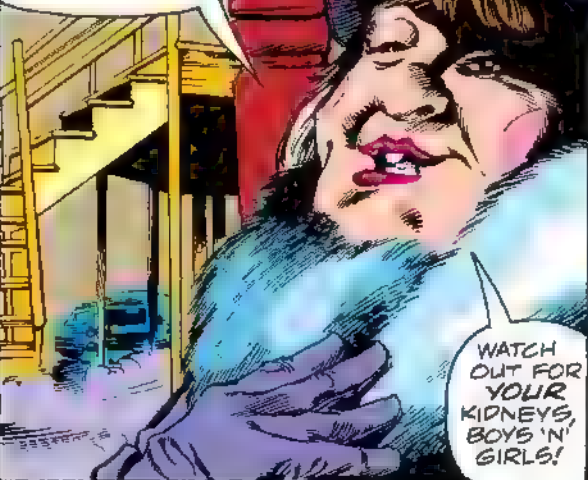


"... SAID TERMS TO BE SERVED UNDER OBSERVATION IN THIS COUNTY'S MENTAL FACILITY."



AND THERE THEY GO... FURTHER PROOF, IF ANY WERE NECESSARY...

...THAT WHOLESOME NICENESS ALWAYS... ALWAYS!-- TRIUMPHS OVER DEPRAVED NASTINESS.

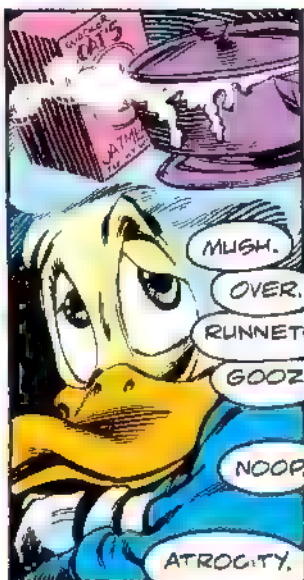


WATCH OUT FOR YOUR KIDNEYS, BOYS 'N' GIRLS!

≡ SIGH≡ MAYBE IT WON'T BE SO BAD. YOU WOOK WIKE YOU COULD USE A WONG WEST.

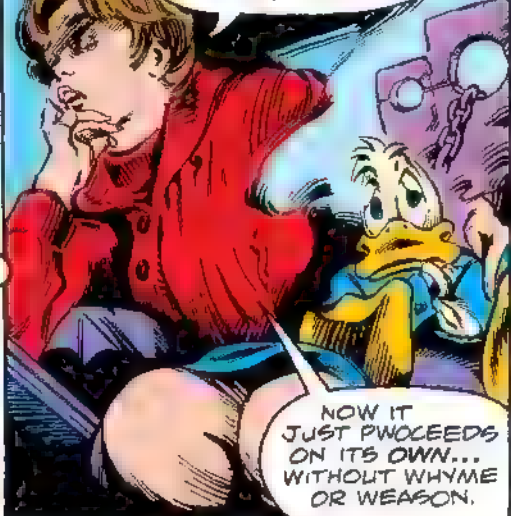


WATCHA THINK? HMMM...?



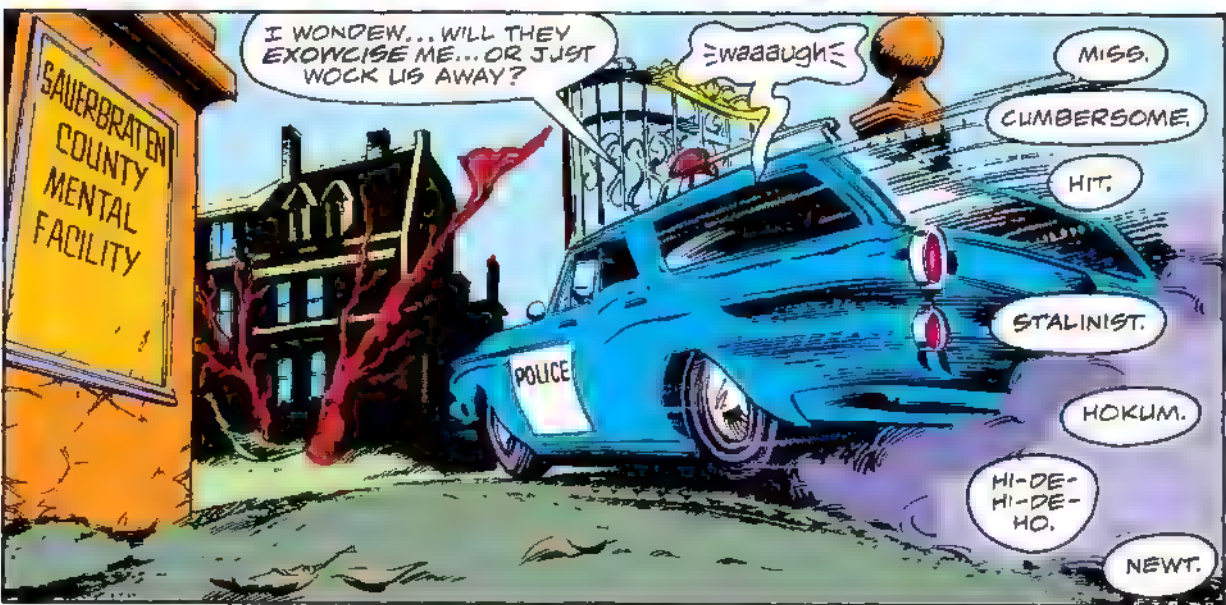
MUSH.
OVER.
RUNNETH.
GOOZ.
NOOP.
ATROCITY.

IT'S SO CONFUSING... WIFE, I MEAN.



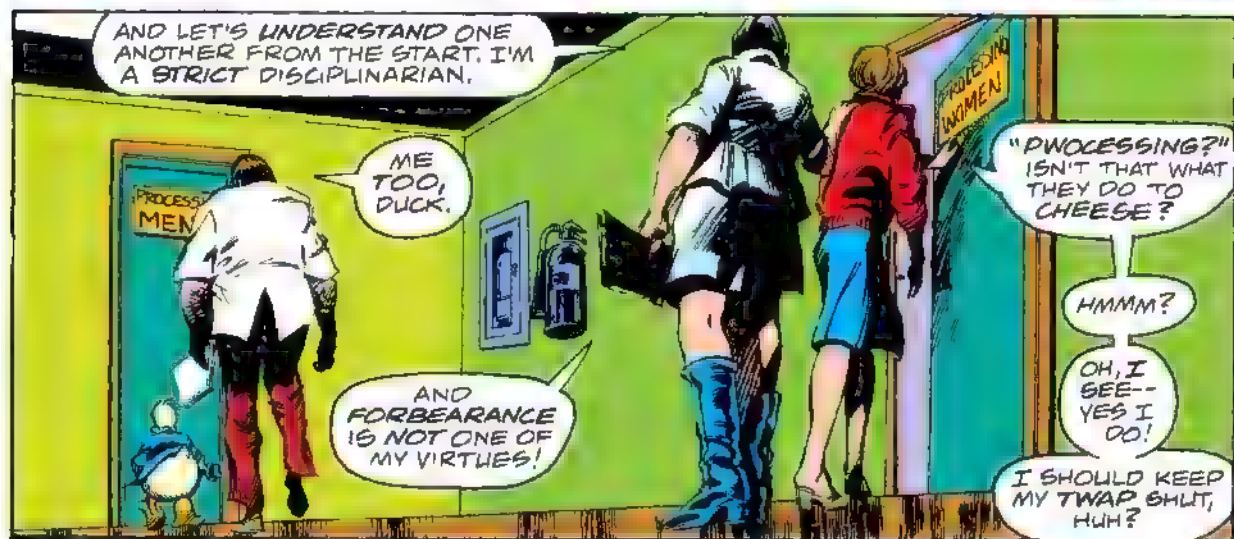
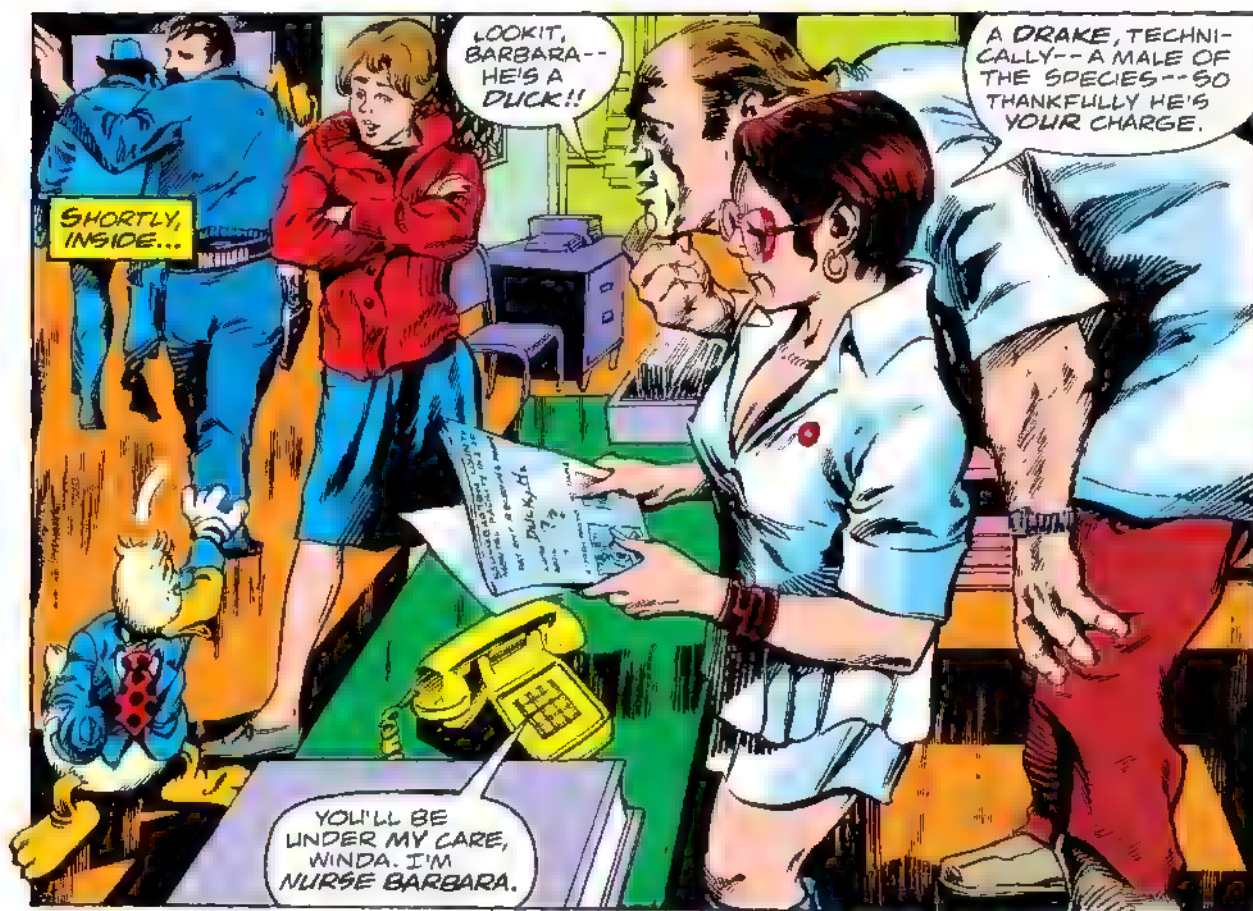
NOW IT JUST PWOCEEDS ON ITS OWN... WITHOUT WHYME OR WEASON.

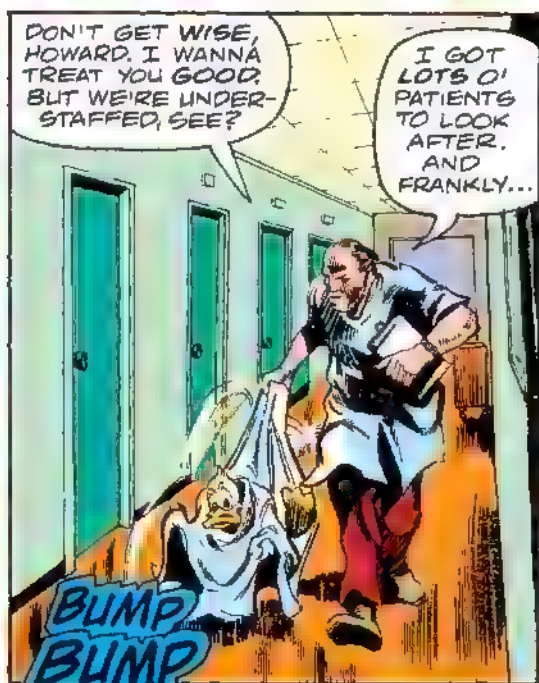
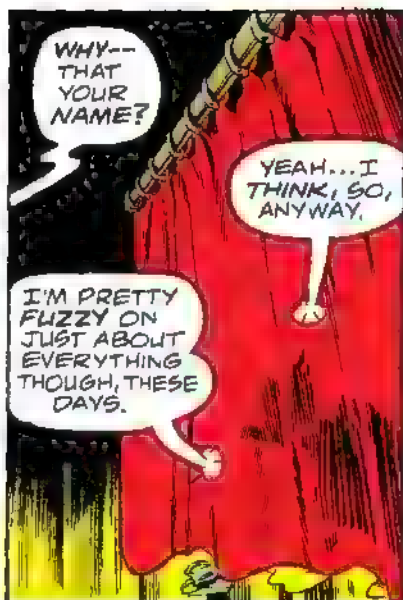
I WONDEW... WILL THEY EXOWCISE ME... OR JUST WOCK LIS AWAY?



≡ WABAUGH≡

MISS.
CUMBERSOME.
HIT.
STALINIST.
HOKUM.
HI-DE-HI-DE-HO.
NEWT.







...AND WAIT 'TIL DOC AVERY GETS 'ROUND TO YOUR INTERVIEW!

FLINCH

GUTS.

PORTENT.



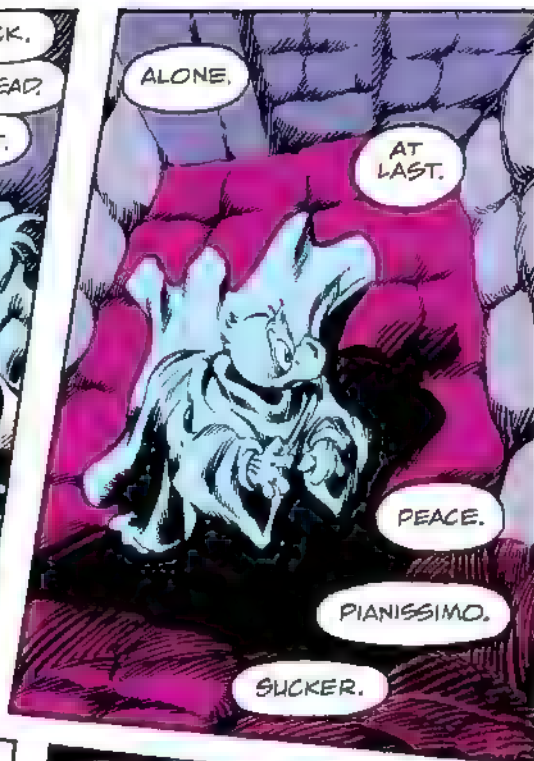
LOOK.

DEAD.

BOLT.

CLICK

SHLIP



ALONE.

AT LAST.

PEACE.

PIANISSIMO.

SUCKER.



AAAH, EASE UP, WILLYA.

IT'S JUST WHAT YOU WANTED, ISN'T IT?

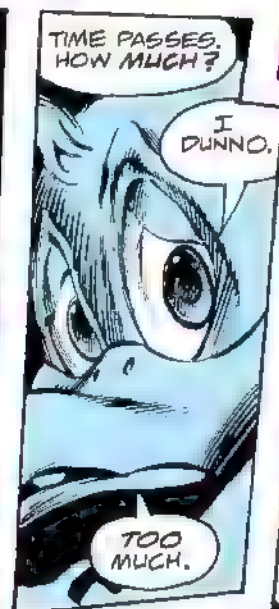
THE SAFE PARK.

THE COZY WARM.

YEAH...!

NOBODY AROUND TO TORTURE YOU...

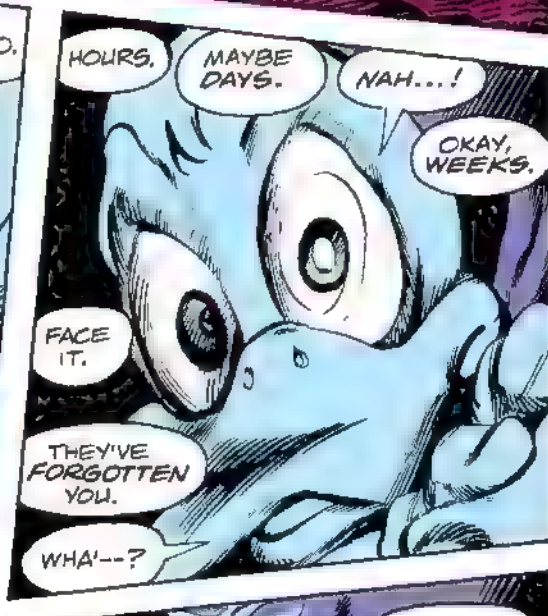
...EXCEPT US.



TIME PASSES. HOW MUCH?

I DUNNO.

TOO MUCH.



HOURS.

MAYBE DAYS.

NAH...!

OKAY, WEEKS.

FACE IT.

THEY'VE FORGOTTEN YOU.

WHA'--?



THEY'VE ALL GONE HOME.

YOO-HOO-- DOCTOR--?

SEE? NO ANSWER.



THEY'VE LEFT YOU TO STARVE...

...OR SUFFOCATE...

...OR WORSE...

HALLO?! ANYBODY HOME??

DOCTOR? CECIL? WINDA?

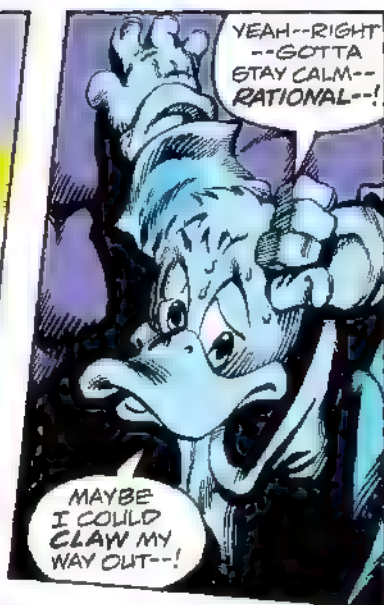
ANY BODY?



NOW, NOW...
LET'S NOT
PANIC.

EPOXY!
EPOXY!

HISTRIONICS
WILL AVAL
US NAUGHT.

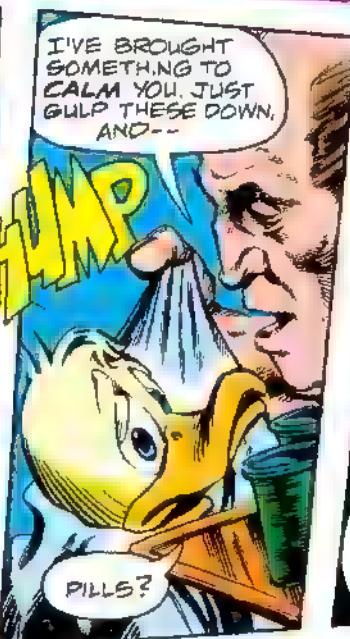


YEAH--RIGHT
--GOTTA
STAY CALM--
RATIONAL--!

MAYBE
I COULD
CLAW MY
WAY OUT--!



HOWARD,
IT'S--OH!
EXCUSE
ME!



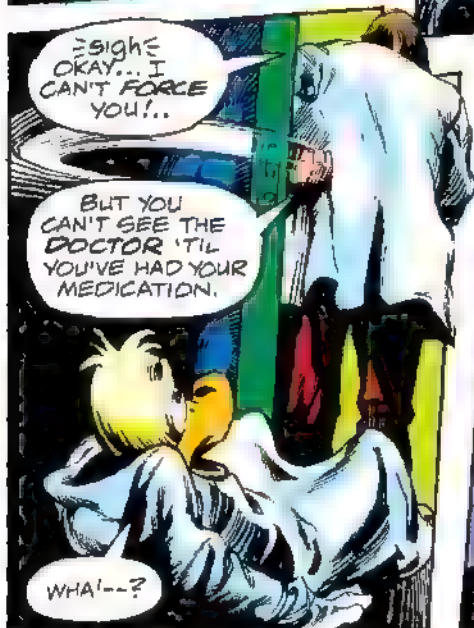
I'VE BROUGHT
SOMETHING TO
CALM YOU. JUST
GULP THESE DOWN,
AND--

PILLS?



UH-UH! NOPE!
NO WAY! SORRY!
I HATE THE
WRETCHED THINGS!

YOU GOTTA
TWIST MY
ARM TO GET
ME TO TAKE
ASPIRIN!



SIGH
OKAY... I
CAN'T FORCE
YOU!...

BUT YOU
CAN'T SEE THE
DOCTOR 'TIL
YOU'VE HAD YOUR
MEDICATION.

WHA!--?



WAIT--
DON'T LEAVE
ME--NOT
AGAIN--

--NOT
AGAIN--!

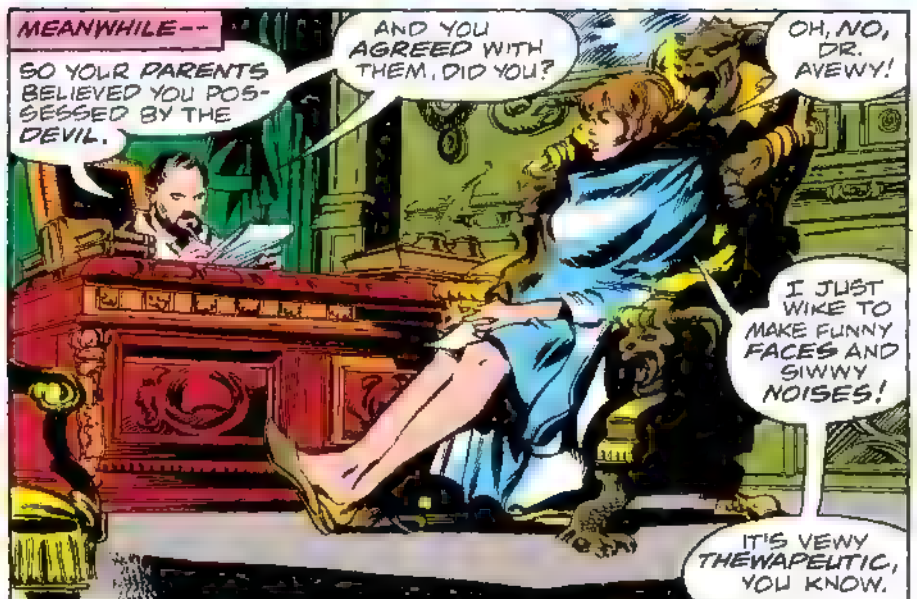
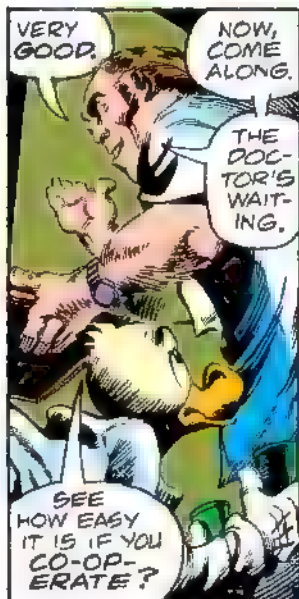
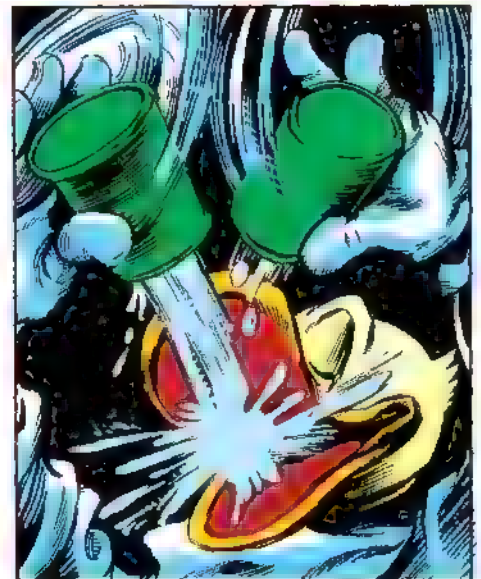
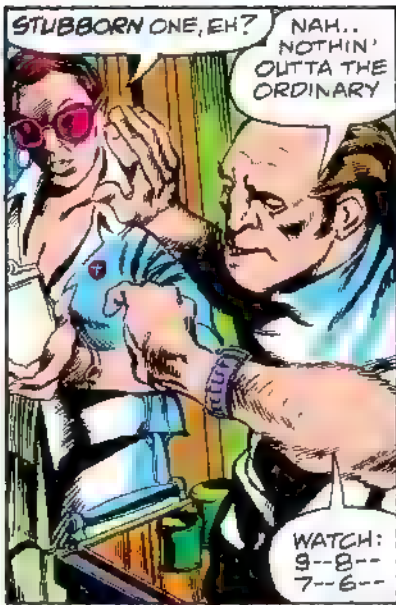
CEGL--?

PLEASE--?

I'LL
GO--

CLICK

--CRAZY.





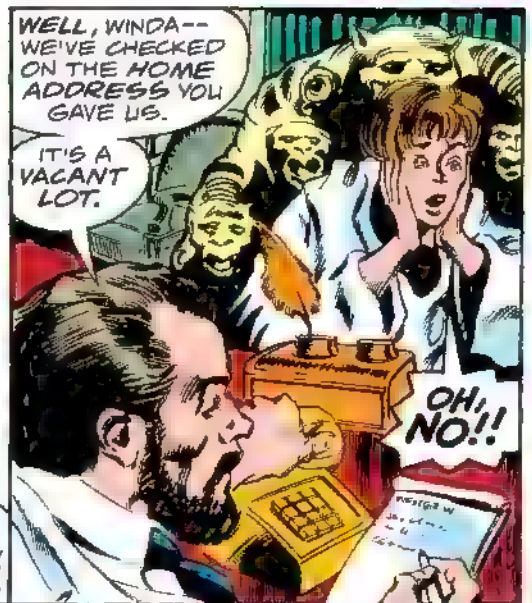
BUT YOU DID CONSENT TO THE TRIP TO CLEVELAND TO BE EXORCISED, DID YOU N--

EXCUSE ME A MOMENT...



YES, THIS IS HE-- OH! HELLO, PHIL-- YOU DID?-- I SEE!

NO, THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY. THANK YOU.



WELL, WINDA-- WE'VE CHECKED ON THE HOME ADDRESS YOU GAVE US.

IT'S A VACANT LOT.

OH, NO!!



THEY PUT ME ON THE BUS-- PACKED UP EVERYTHING-- EVEN THE HOUSE--

--AND MOVED AWAY!! I'M AWONE! FOWSAKEN! MAWOONED!

NOW, WINDA, ARE YOU SURE?



MIGHTN'T YOU HAVE GIVEN US AN INCORRECT ADDRESS, OR--?

NO! NO! THE DEVIL POSSESSED ME AND MY EMBAW-WASSED PARENTS HAVE FWED-- DIS-OWNED ME!!

WHERE CAN I GO? WHAT CAN I DO?? OH, WOE!



RIGHT NOW, YOU CAN GO WITH YOUR NURSE TO YOUR ROOM!

--WE'LL EVEN CONSULT AN EXORCIST FOR AN OPINION.

IN THE MORNING, WE'LL RUN SOME TESTS--AND IF IT'LL MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER--

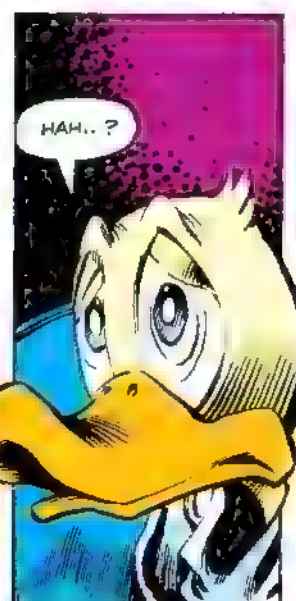
WEAWWY?! OH, THANK YOU!!



OUTSIDE, IN AVERY'S WAITING ROOM...

HOWARD! HOW WOVEWY TO SEE YOU!

IT'S YOUR FRIEND, HOWARD. SAY "HELLO."



HAW..?



DR MORTON AVERY IS A GOOD PSYCHIATRIST. HE STUDIED THE FREUDIANS, THE BEHAVIORISTS, AND THE SO-CALLED "THIRD FORCE" IN DEPTH. HE'S EVEN SCANNED CASTENEDA, AND HE'S CURRENT ON ALL THE MAJOR JOURNALS.

BUT ANARE AS HE IS OF ALL THE NEW THERAPIES OF THE COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS, OF ARCHE-TYPES, OF NONORDINARY REALITIES--

NOTHING IN HIS READING HAS PREPARED HIM TO DEAL WITH THE SWIRLING, SEETHING, SAVAGE NIGHTMARE RISING IN BILLONS FROM WINDA'S SKULL!

HALLO...?

HAH...?

NEXT
CHAINS, LEATHER, AND PETUNIAS!

HOWARD
THE DUCK™

MARVEL® COMICS GROUP



30¢

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02415

TRAPPED IN A WORLD HE NEVER MADE!

HOWARD THE DUCK



KISS AND TELL
IN THE
PSYCHO-WARD!

OMEN OF
AN EXORCIST!



From the time of his hatching, he was...different. A potentially brilliant scholar who dreaded the structured environment of school, he educated himself in the streets, taking whatever work was available, formulating his philosophy of self from what he learned of the world about him. And then the Cosmic Axis shifted. .and that world *changed*. Suddenly, he was stranded in a universe he could not fathom. Without warning, he became a strange fowl in an even stranger land.

Stan Lee PRESENTS: **HOWARD THE DUCK!**™

STEVE GERBER
WRITER/EDITOR

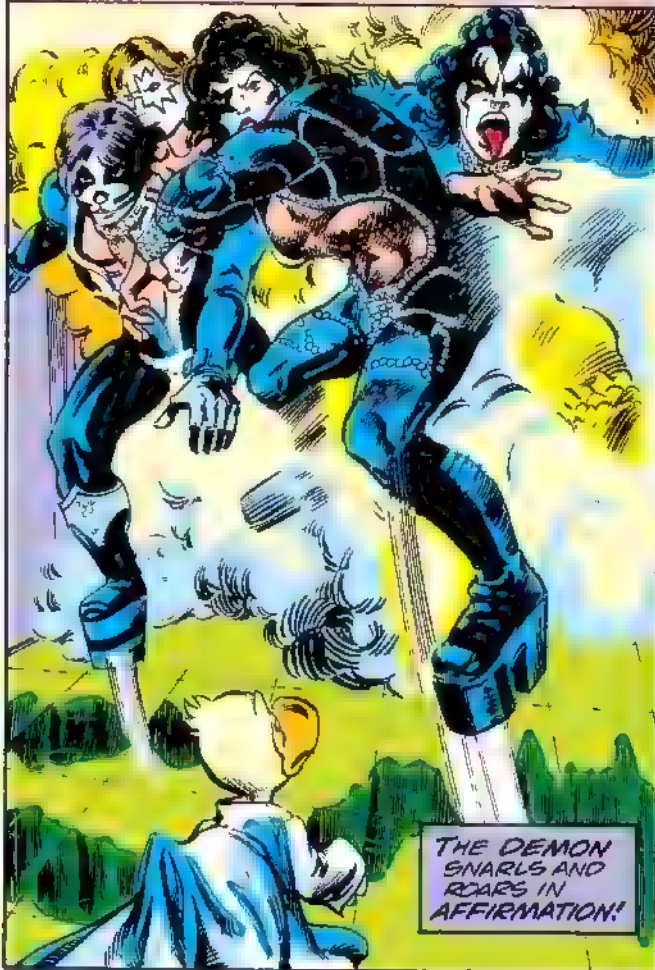
GENE COLAN
ARTIST

STEVE LEIALOHA
INKER

JIM NOVAK, LETTERER
JAN COHEN, COLORIST



MESSAGE CONCLUDED, THE FOUR PHANTASMS RETREAT INTO THE COILS OF SMOKE. "REMEMBER THE WORD," THE STARCHILD'S JABBING FINGER SEEMS TO SAY "KISS IT, YOU'RE THE TARGET, BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A SITTING DUCK!"



THE DEMON SNARLS AND ROARS IN AFFIRMATION!



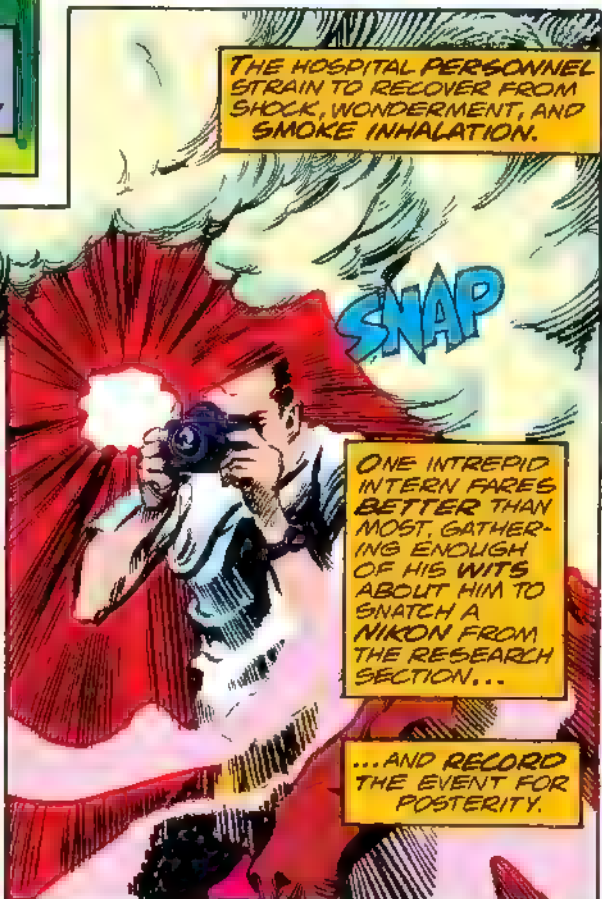
AND THEN, WITH ONE AWFUL WHOOSH, THEY ARE DRAWN BACK INTO WINDA'S BRAIN.



THE STORM SUBSIDES.

HOWARD IS LEFT WITH HIS STUPOR AND A SEQUIN OF QUESTIONABLE WISDOM.

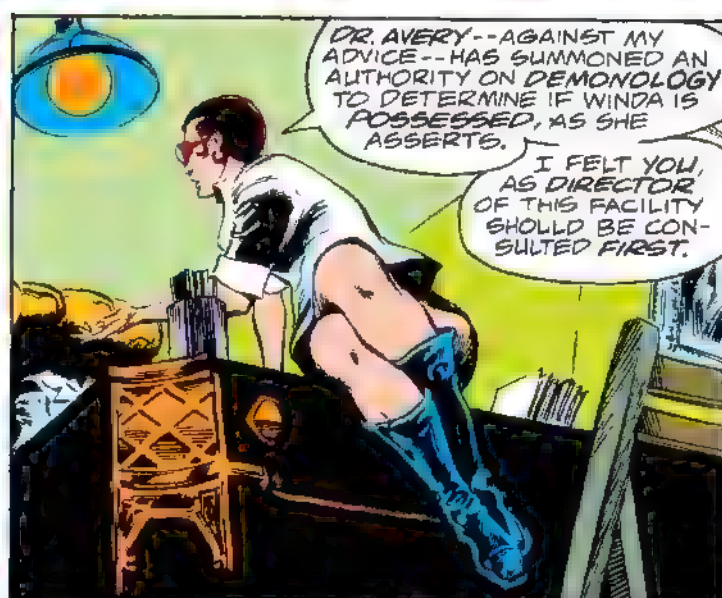
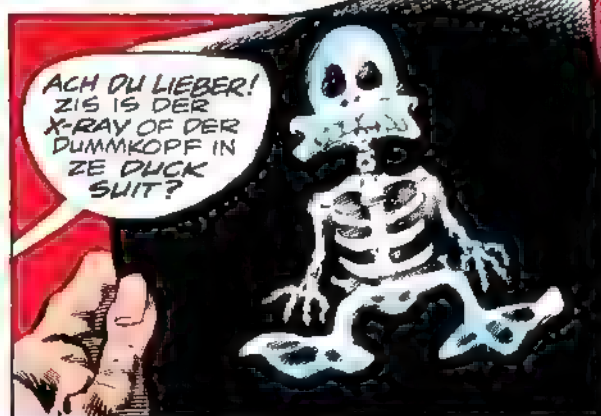
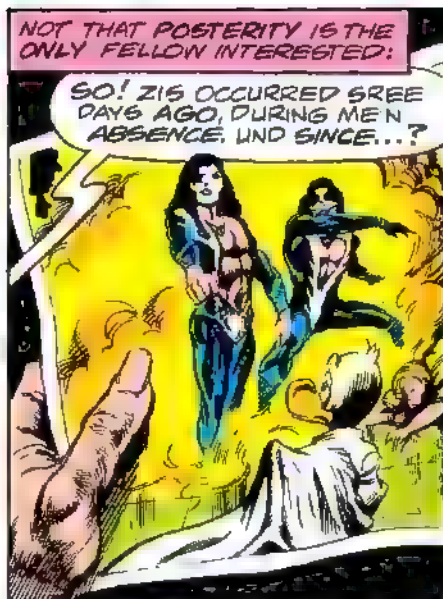
HAM...?

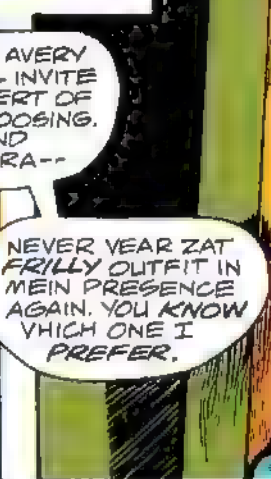


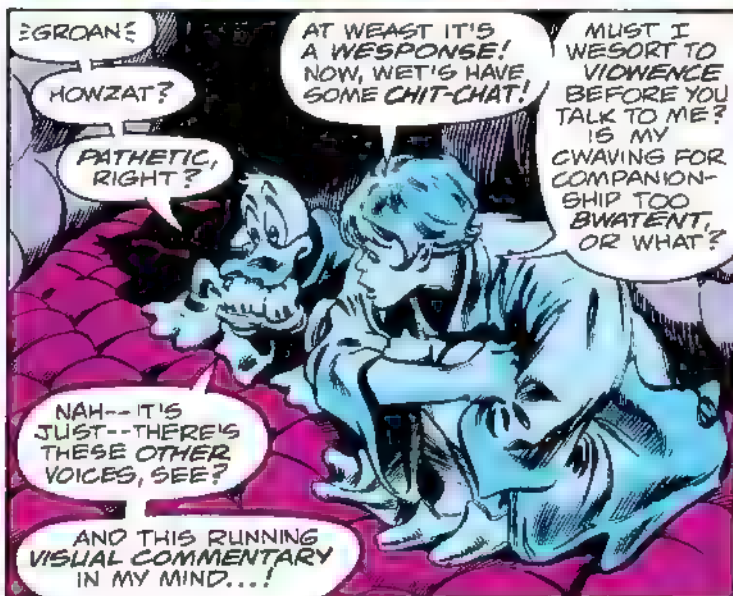
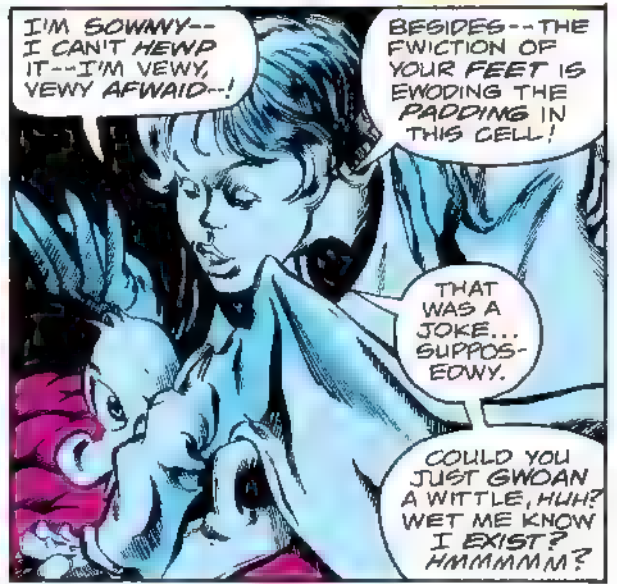
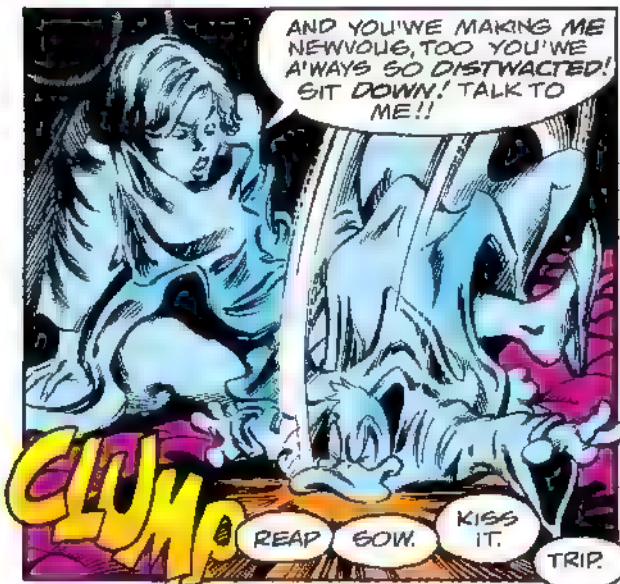
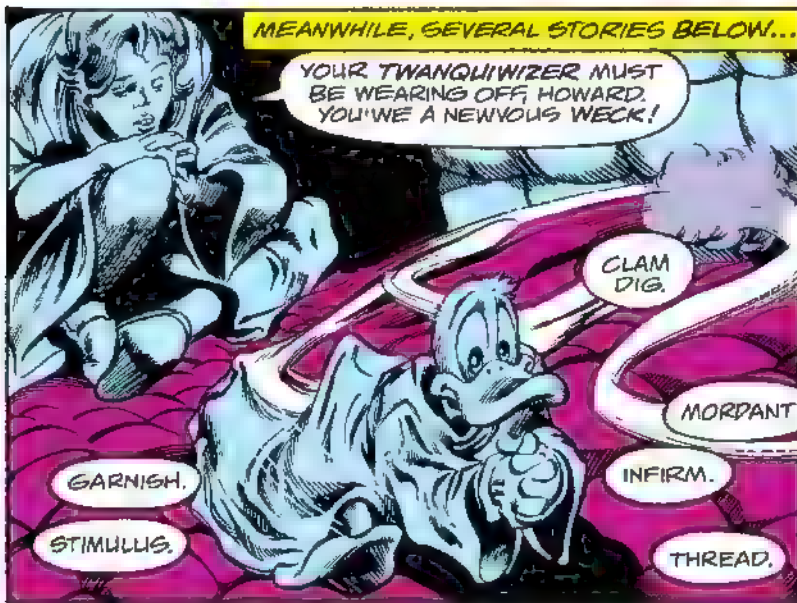
THE HOSPITAL PERSONNEL STRAIN TO RECOVER FROM SHOCK, WONDERMENT, AND SMOKE INHALATION.

ONE INTREPID INTERN FARES BETTER THAN MOST, GATHERING ENOUGH OF HIS WITS ABOUT HIM TO SNATCH A NIKON FROM THE RESEARCH SECTION...

...AND RECORD THE EVENT FOR POSTERITY.









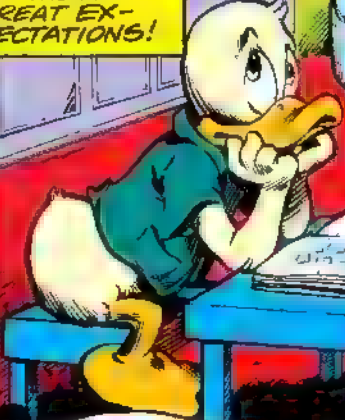
3CHOKES I KNEW I'D COME TO THIS-- I WAS NEVER CUT OUT FOR SANITY--COULDN'T HANDLE THE PRESSURE--!

DITTO FOR SUCCESS-- MAYBE DITTO FOR LIVING--!

"NUTS, I NEVER ASKED TO BE HATCHED--LET ALONE MY PARENTS! FIRST-HATCHED, THE LUCKLESS, INHERITOR OF ALL THEIR GREAT EXPECTATIONS!"

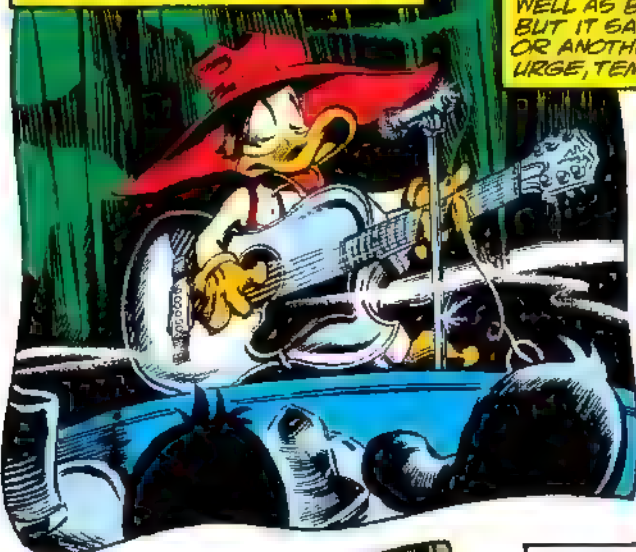


"THEY WANTED ME TA BE A LAWYER! MY FIRST APTITUDE TEST PEGGED ME FOR A MORTICIAN --REALLY!"

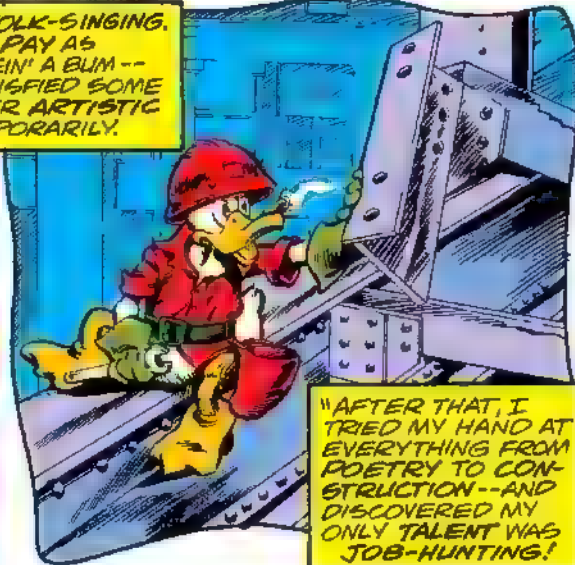


"BUT I THINK EVEN AS A KID--I WANTED TO BE A DERELICT, I LIKED THE HOURS."

"COULDN'T QUITE RECONCILE THAT WITH MY MIDDLE-CLASS UPBRINGING, THOUGH-- SO AFTER A SHORT, UNDISTINGUISHED ACADEMIC CAREER--

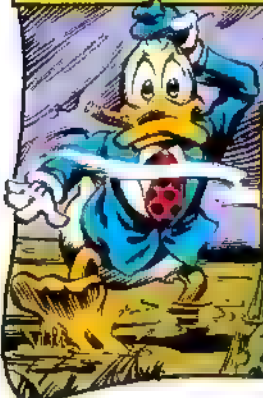


"I TRIED FOLK-SINGING, DIDN'T PAY AS WELL AS BEIN' A BUM-- BUT IT SATISFIED SOME OR ANOTHER ARTISTIC URGE, TEMPORARILY."



"AFTER THAT, I TRIED MY HAND AT EVERYTHING FROM POETRY TO CONSTRUCTION--AND DISCOVERED MY ONLY TALENT WAS JOB-HUNTING!"

"THEN ONE DAY, THE COSMIC WHATSIS SHIFTED--AN! SUDDENLY I WAS WADIN' THROUGH A SWAMP INSTEAD O' POUNDIN' THE PAVEMENT!"



'YEP, HERE I WAS ON YOUR WORLD --AND THE TERM 'MISFIT' TOOK ON WHOLE NEW VISTAS OF MEANING!

3WAAAAUGHS

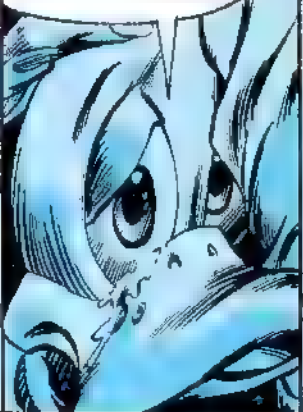
3CHOKES 3SOB3

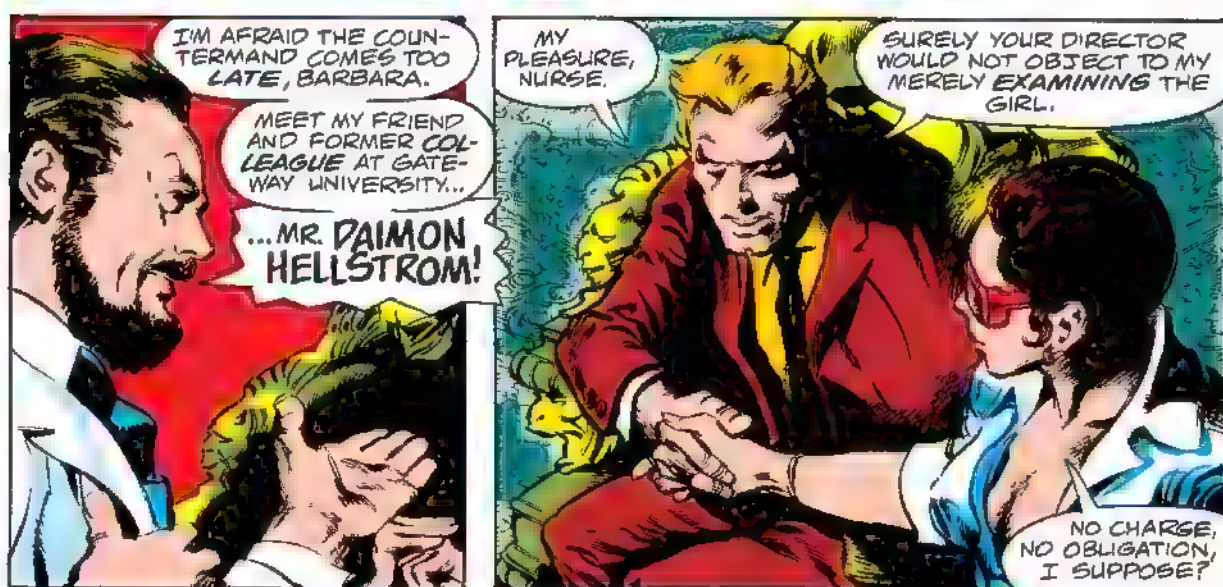
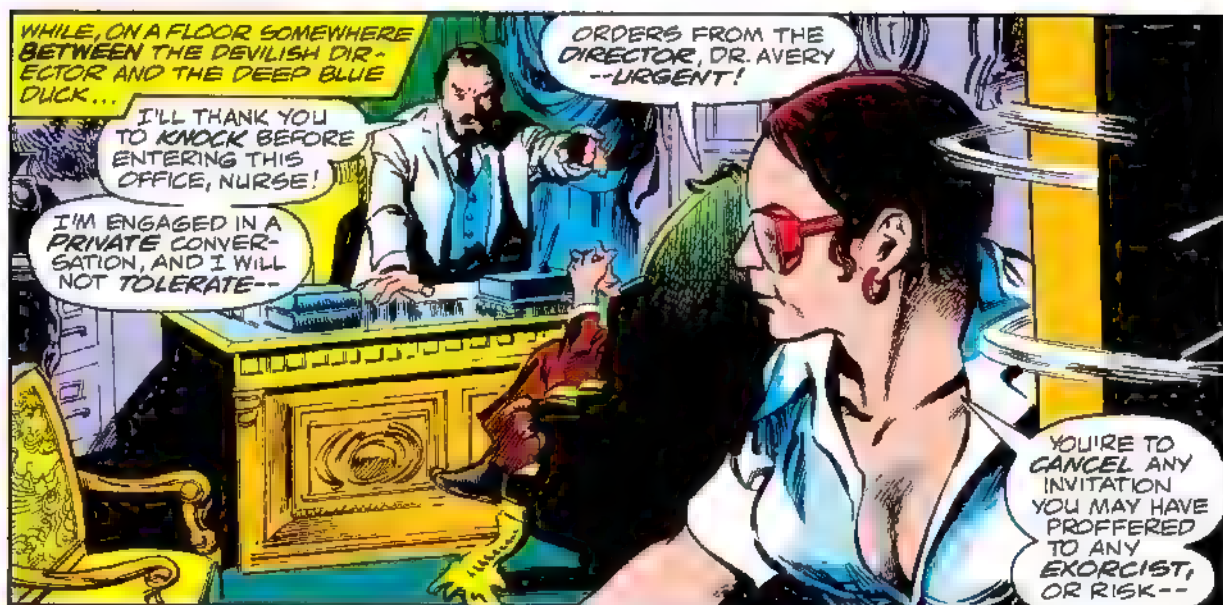
AWWN-- THEWE, THEWE! IT'LL ALL BE OH-KAY... EVENTHAWWY.



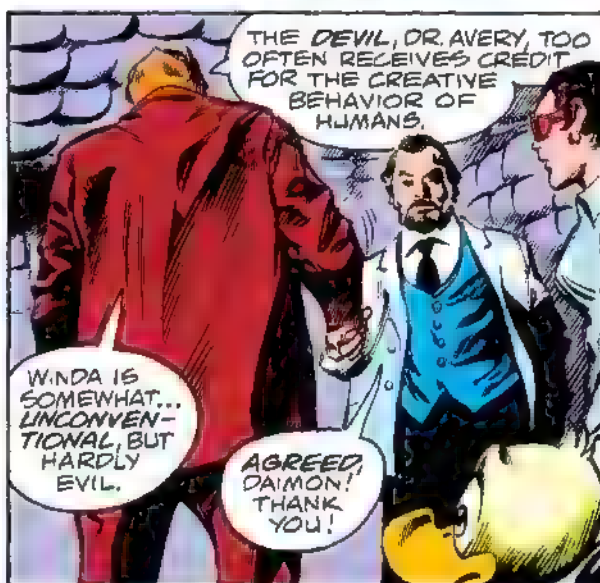
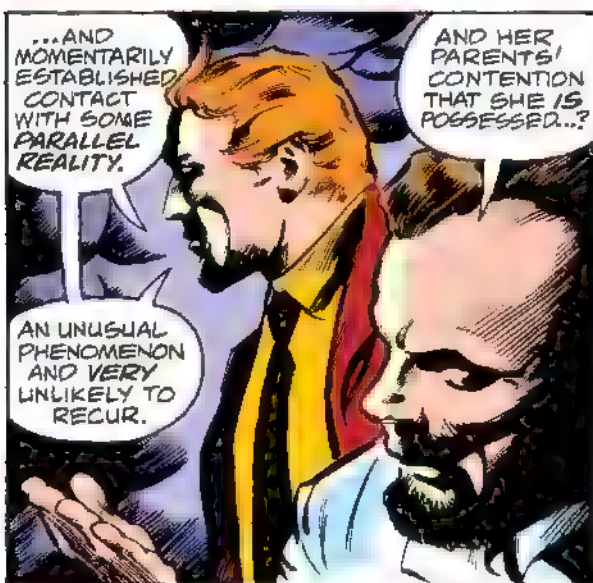
YOU JUST HAVE TO FIND OUT WHO YOU ARE-- WHAT YOU WANT OUT OF WIFE.

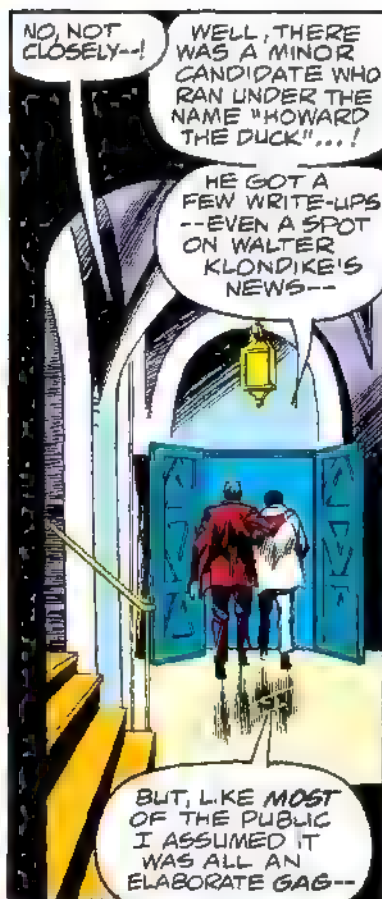
LIFE'S TOO FAR IN THE FUTURE TO THINK ABOUT! RIGHT NOW, I COULD USE A GOOD CIGAR!

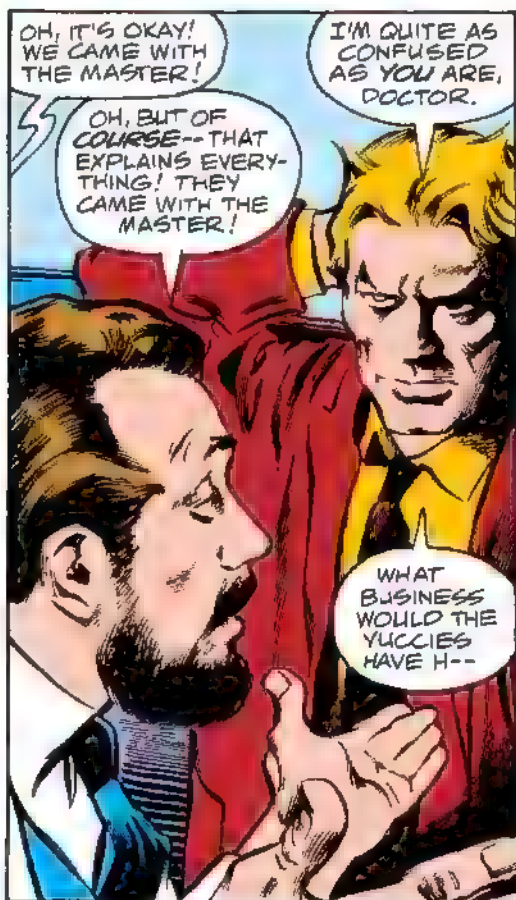
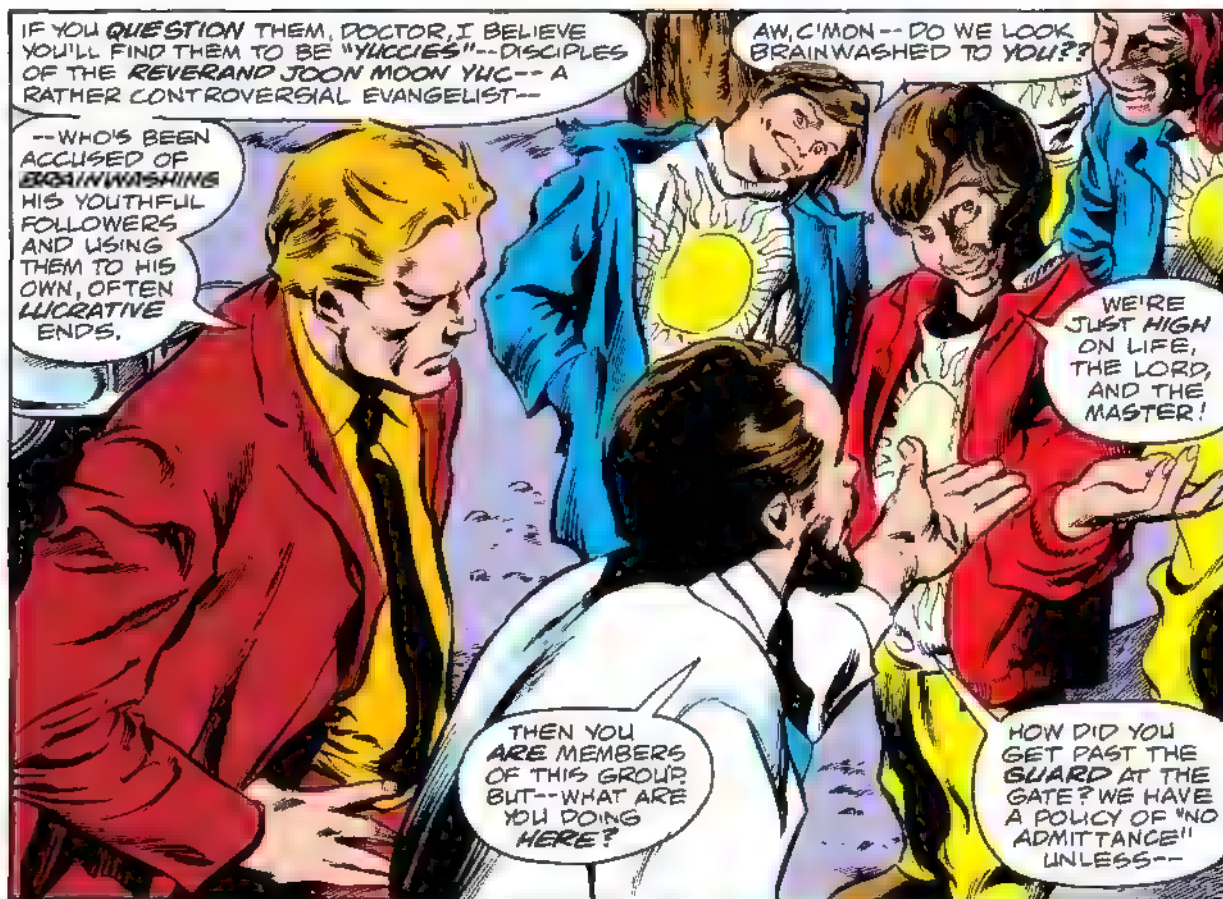


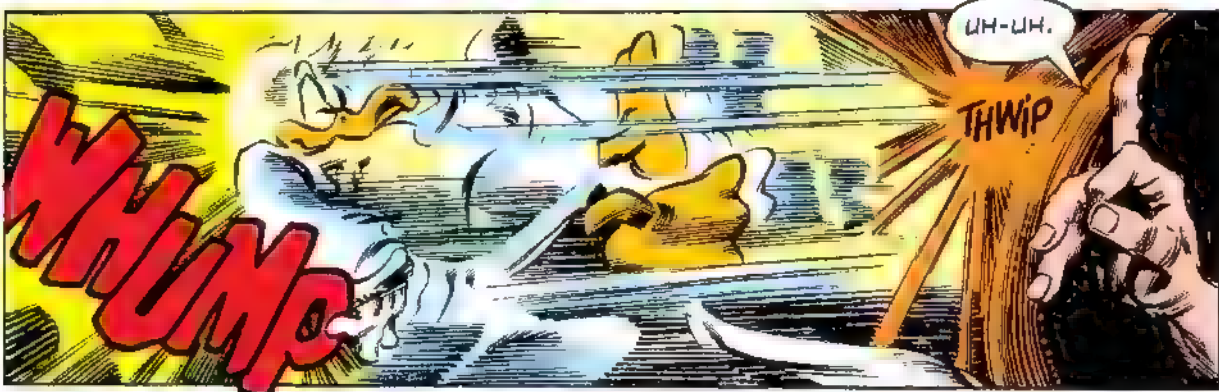
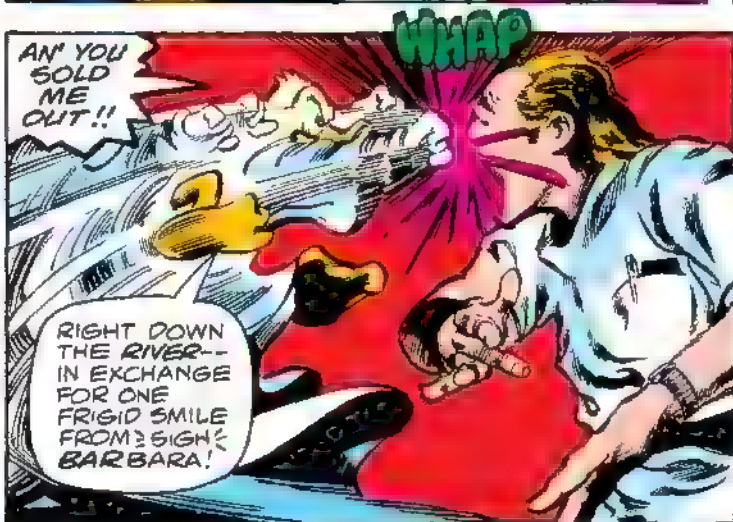
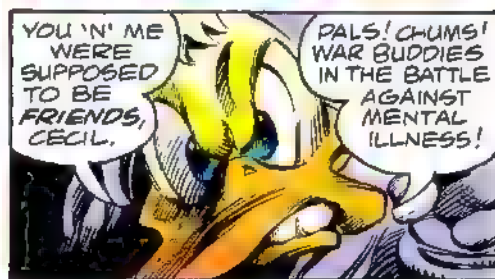
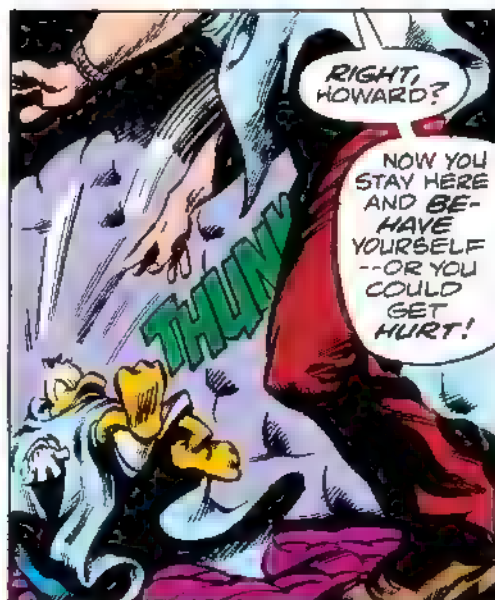
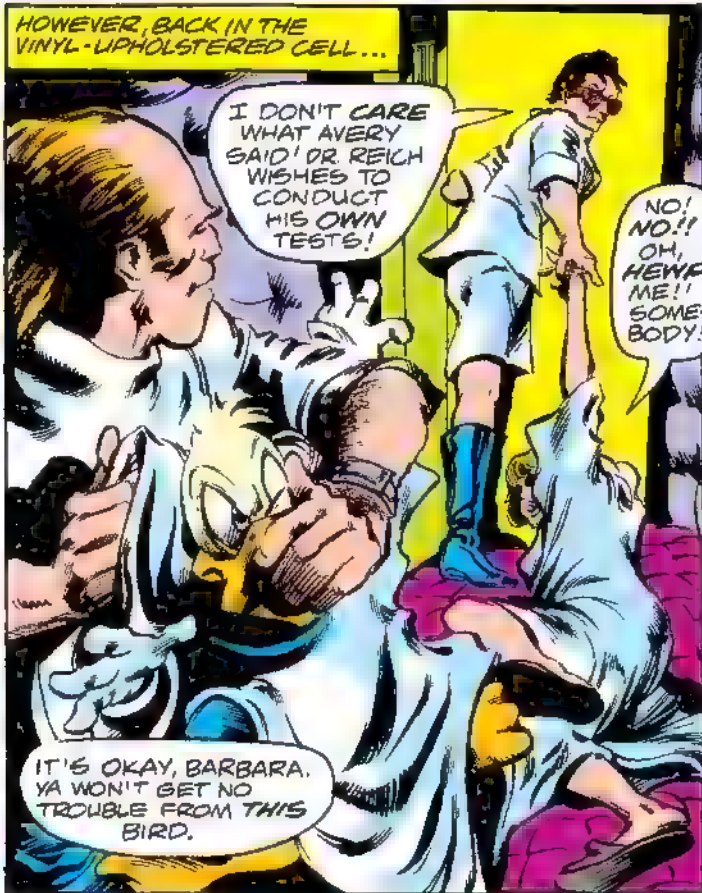


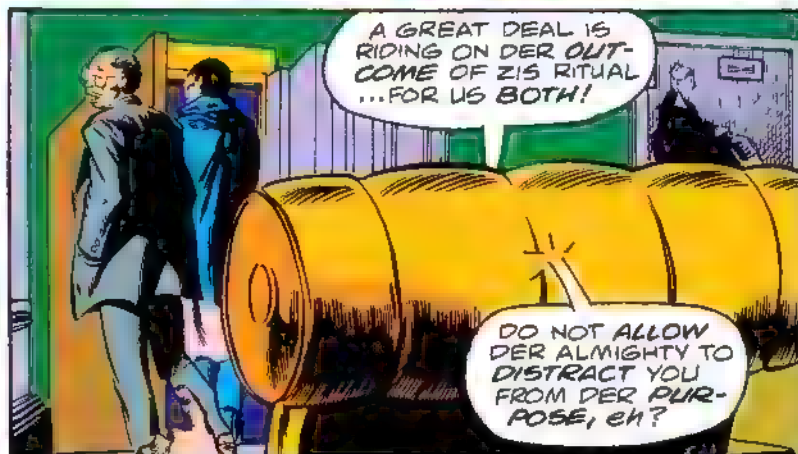
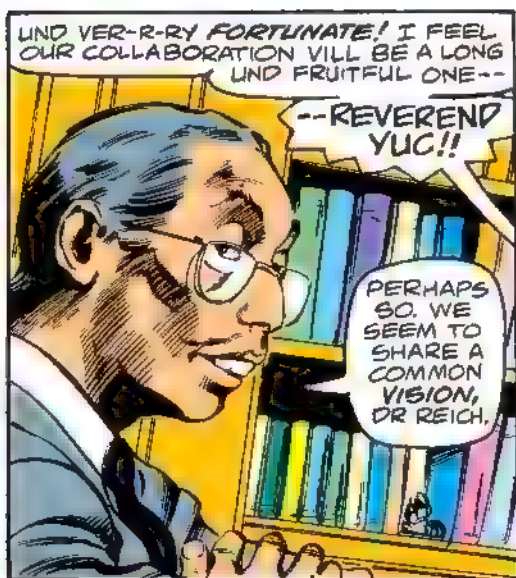
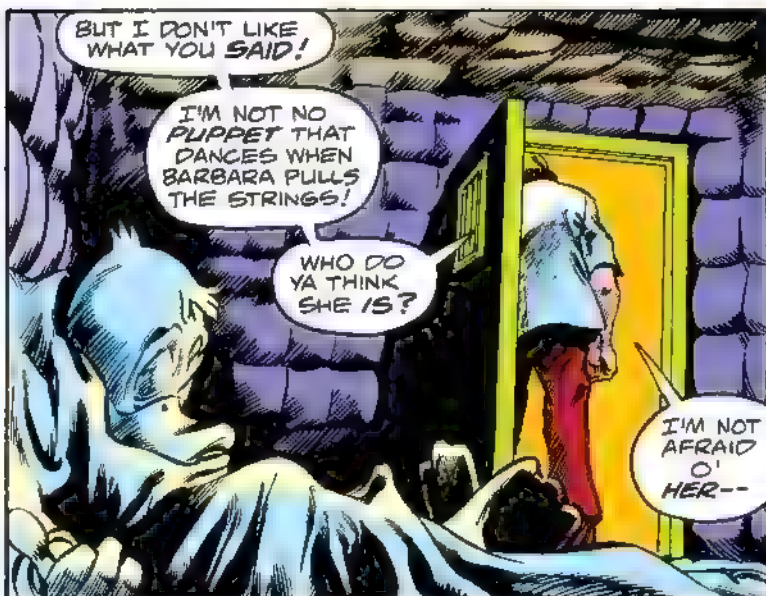


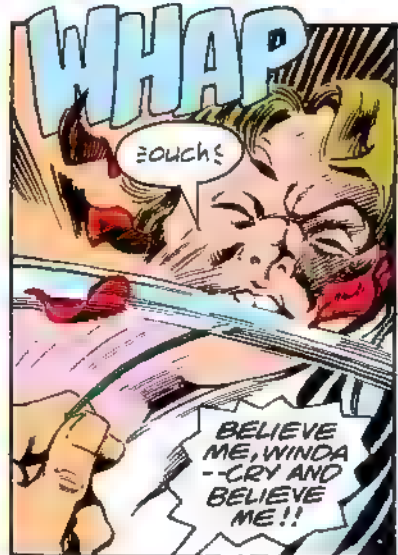
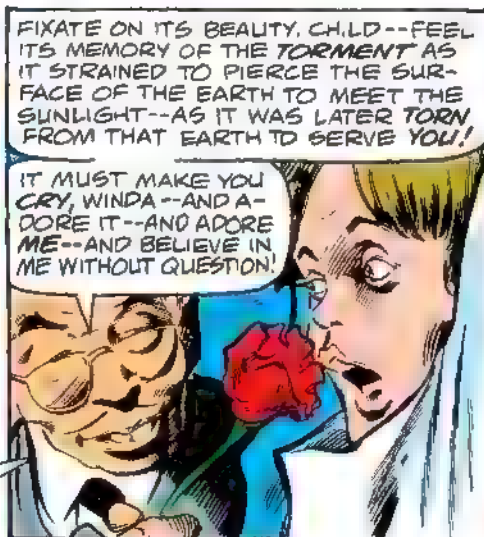
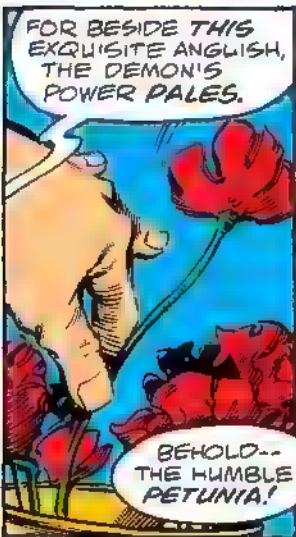
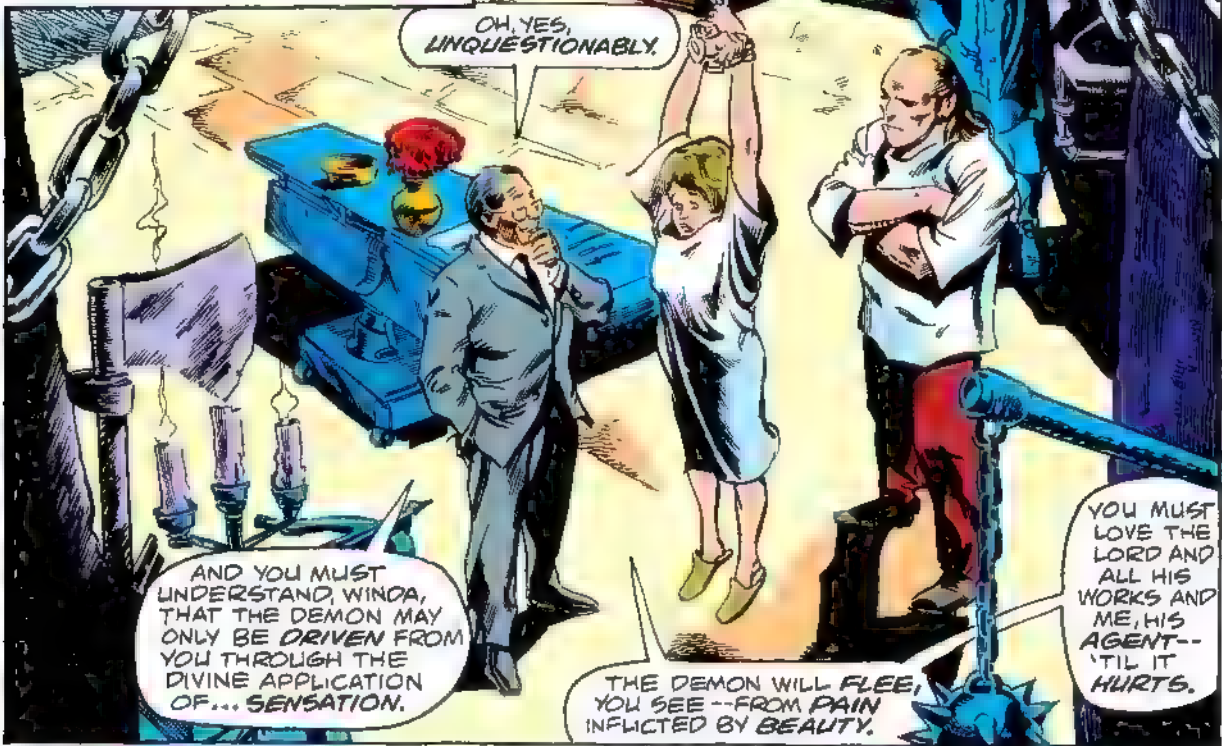
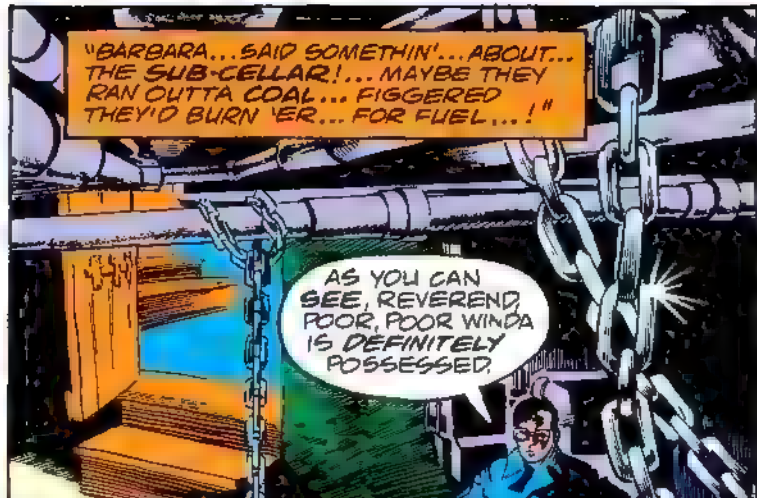


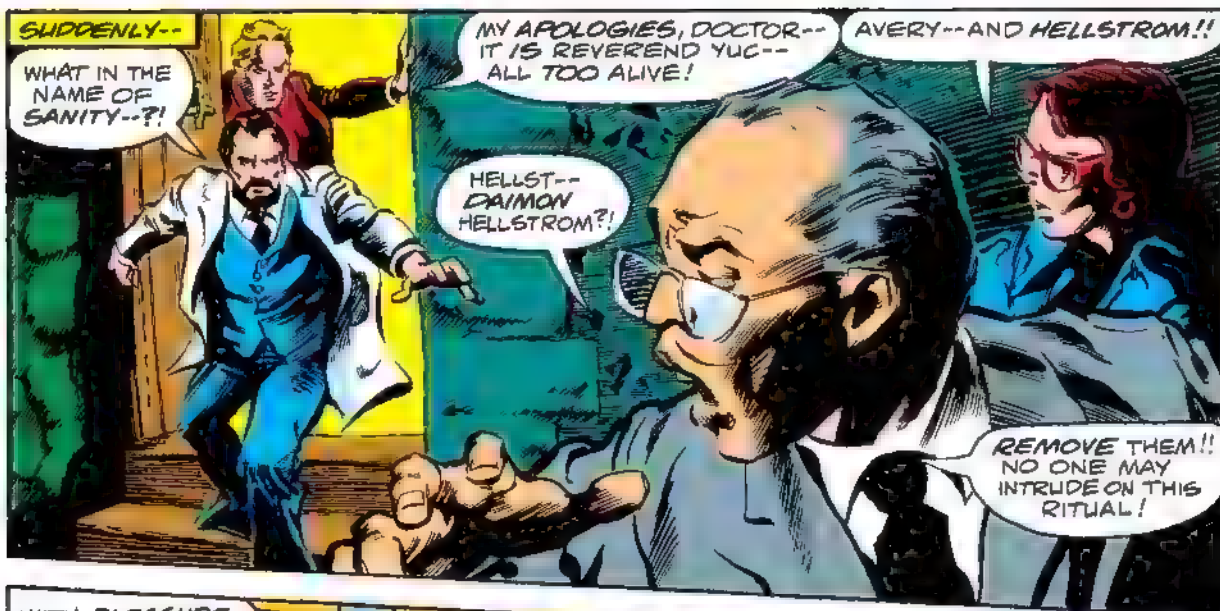












SUDDENLY--

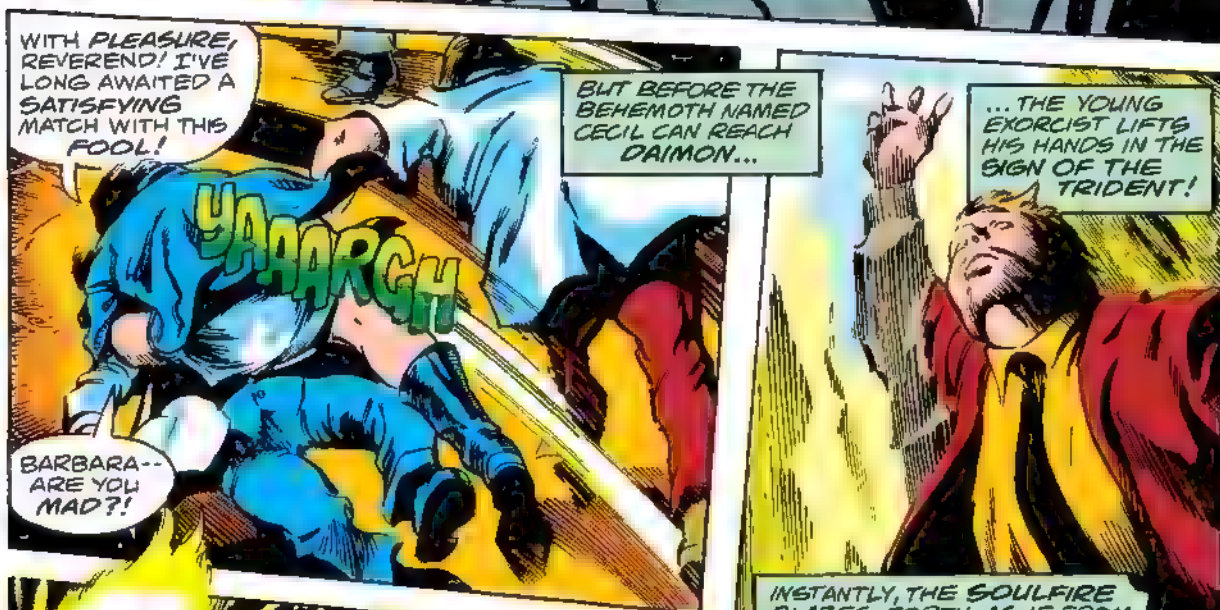
WHAT IN THE
NAME OF
SANITY--?!

MY APOLOGIES, DOCTOR--
IT IS REVEREND YUC--
ALL TOO ALIVE!

AVERY--AND HELLSTROM!!

HELLST--
DAIMON
HELLSTROM?!

REMOVE THEM!!
NO ONE MAY
INTRUDE ON THIS
RITUAL!



WITH PLEASURE,
REVEREND! I'VE
LONG AWAITED A
SATISFYING
MATCH WITH THIS
FOOL!

BUT BEFORE THE
BEHEMOTH NAMED
CECIL CAN REACH
DAIMON...

...THE YOUNG
EXORCIST LIFTS
HIS HANDS IN THE
SIGN OF THE
TRIDENT!

BARBARA--
ARE YOU
MAD?!

IT SEEMS, ON
SIGHT, TO BE
CONSUMING
HIM ALIVE!
BUT IN TRUTH...

IT'S AT THIS
CRUCIAL
MOMENT...

WINDA...?

HAH...?

≡WHOOPS≡

INSTANTLY, THE SOULFIRE
BLAZES FORTH, AS IF FROM
WITHIN HIS PORES, SHEATHING
DAIMON IN A COLUMN OF
SULFUROUS FLAME!

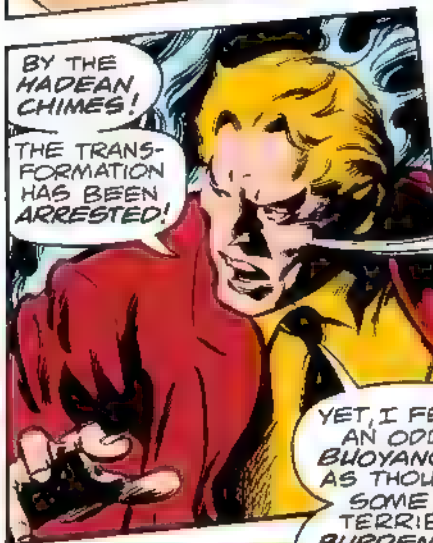
...IT IS THE FIRST STAGE
IN A TOTAL AND TERRI-
FYING TRANSFORMATION!

...THAT A CONCERNED,
BUT STILL GROGGY
FOWL CHOOSES TO
STUMBLE BACK ONTO
THE SCENE.



DID YOU PRESUME, HELLSTROM, THAT I WOULD NOT BE AWARE OF YOUR PECULIAR TALENTS...

.. OR, FOR THAT MATTER, THE RUMORS CONCERNING YOUR LINEAGE?



BY THE HADEAN CHIMES!

THE TRANSFORMATION HAS BEEN ARRESTED!

YET, I FEEL AN ODD BUOYANCY AS THOUGH SOME TERRIBLE BURDEN HAS BEEN LIFTED FROM--



I'VE BEEN PREPARED TO CONFRONT YOU NOW FOR SOME TIME...

NO!!

...PREPARED TO UNLEASH THE FURY OF THE WHITE WIND...TO STRIP THE TEMPTER'S FLAME FROM YOUR VERY FLESH...!

YOU SEE, I'VE DABBLED IN DEMONOLOGY, ALSO!

WHOOSH!



IT HAS, DAIMON--FOR YOUR SECOND SOUL, YOUR DEMONIC SELF--

--HAS FOUND A NEW HOME!!

NEXT THE RETURN OF BEVERLY-- THE RETURN TO CLEVELAND-- AND A FEW NEW TURNS OF FATE'S CRUEL SCREW IN-- **A DUCK POSSESSED!**

HOWARD
THE DUCK™

MARVEL® COMICS GROUP

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
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02415

TRAPPED IN A WORLD HE NEVER MADE!

HOWARD THE DUCK

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WITHIN
MAN AND
FOWL LURKS
A DEMON
DEMANDING
TO BE SET
FREE!

**A DUCK
POSSESSED!**

From the time of his hatching, he was...different. A potentially brilliant scholar who dreaded the structured environment of school, he educated himself in the streets, taking whatever work was available, formulating his philosophy of self from what he learned of the world about him. And then the Cosmic Axis shifted...and that world *changed*. Suddenly, he was stranded in a universe he could not fathom. Without warning, he became a strange fowl in an even stranger land.

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WRITER/EDITOR

* GENE COLAN
PENCILLER

* KLAUS JANSON
INKER

* JIM NOVAK
LETTERER

* IRENE VARTANOFF
COLORIST

IT'S
TWO!
TWO! TWO
DUCKS IN
ONE!

DAIMON HELLSTROM'S
SECOND SELF--THE
IMPLACABLY SAVAGE
SON OF SATAN--HAS
BEEN TRANSPLANTED
FROM THE YOUNG
EXORCIST'S BODY
INTO HOWARD'S!

AND HOWEVER LUDICROUS THE
SITUATION MAY APPEAR, ITS
POTENTIAL FOR DISASTER IS
MONUMENTAL! FOR DESPITE
THE FOWL'S DIMINUTIVE STATURE,
HE NOW EMBODIES ALL THE
SEETHING POWER, ALL THE
VIRULENT RAGE, ALL THE CALLOUS
DISDAIN OF MORALITY AND
HUMANKINDNESS--OF THE
TRUE SCION OF HELL!

HE IS, IN
SHORT--

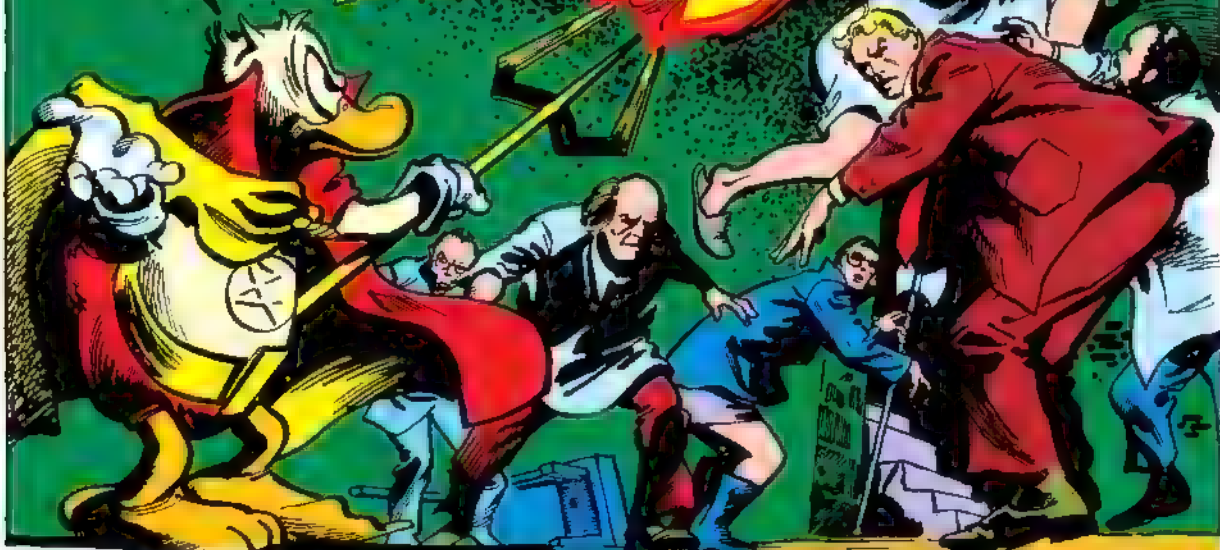
A DUCK Possessed!

THE SUBCELLAR OF SAUERBRATEN COUNTY, OHIO'S,
MENTAL FACILITY:

WAAUGH

ZZZZZZ

BY THE
SEVEN
CIRCLES!
EVEN THE
SOULFIRE
IS AT HIS
COMMAND!



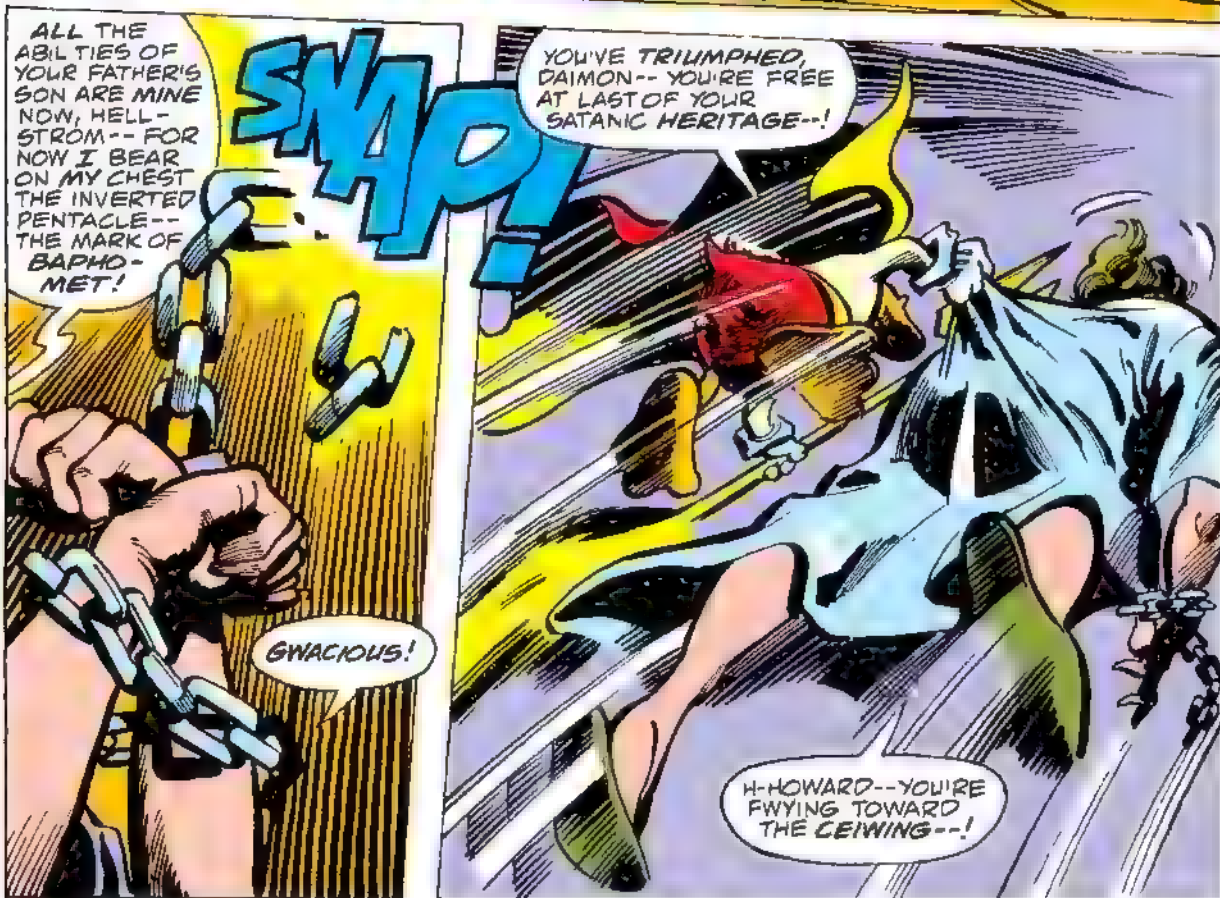
ALL THE
ABILITIES OF
YOUR FATHER'S
SON ARE MINE
NOW, HELL-
STROM-- FOR
NOW I BEAR
ON MY CHEST
THE INVERTED
PENTACLE--
THE MARK OF
BAPHO-
MET!

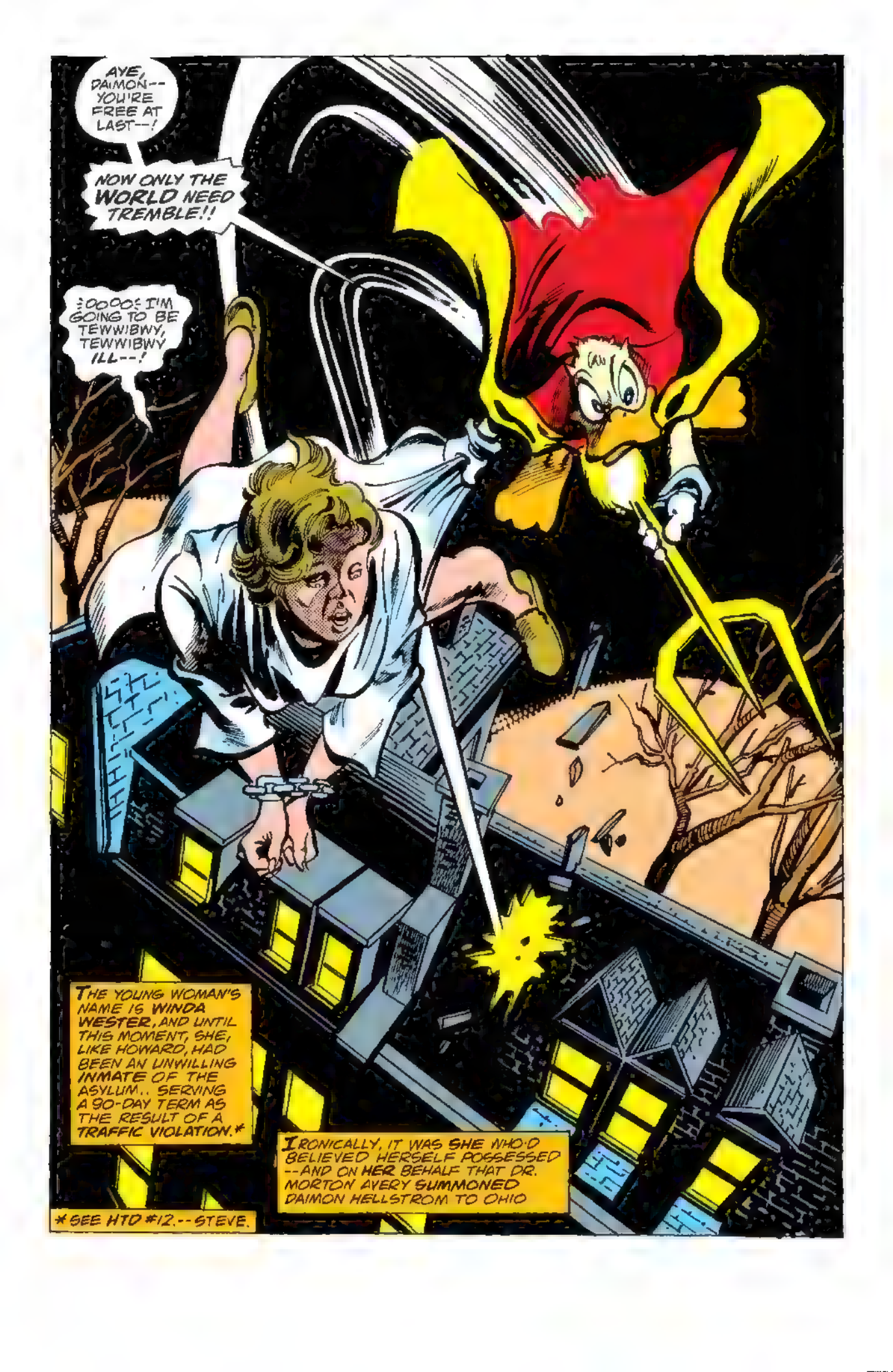
SNAP!

YOU'VE TRIUMPHED,
DAIMON-- YOU'RE FREE
AT LAST OF YOUR
SATANIC HERITAGE--!

GNACIOUS!

H-HOWARD--YOU'RE
FWYING TOWARD
THE CEIVING--!





AYE,
DAIMON--
YOU'RE
FREE AT
LAST--!

NOW ONLY THE
WORLD NEED
TREMBLE!!

OOOOO! I'M
GOING TO BE
TEWWIBWY,
TEWWIBWY
ILL--!

THE YOUNG WOMAN'S
NAME IS WINDA
WESTER, AND UNTIL
THIS MOMENT, SHE,
LIKE HOWARD, HAD
BEEN AN UNWILLING
INMATE OF THE
ASYLUM... SERVING
A 90-DAY TERM AS
THE RESULT OF A
TRAFFIC VIOLATION.*

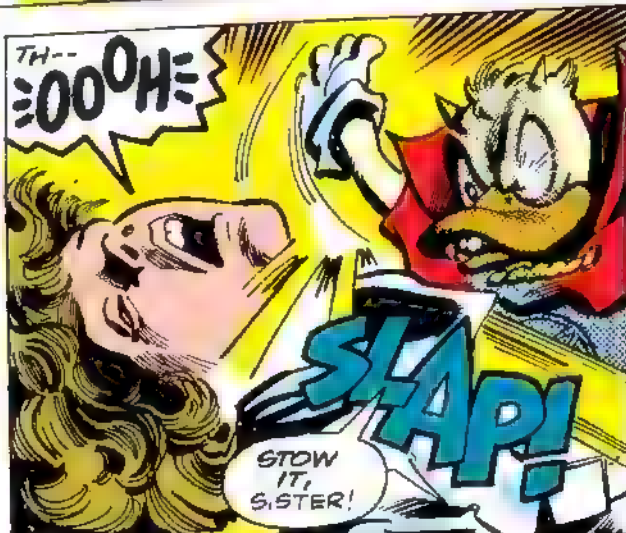
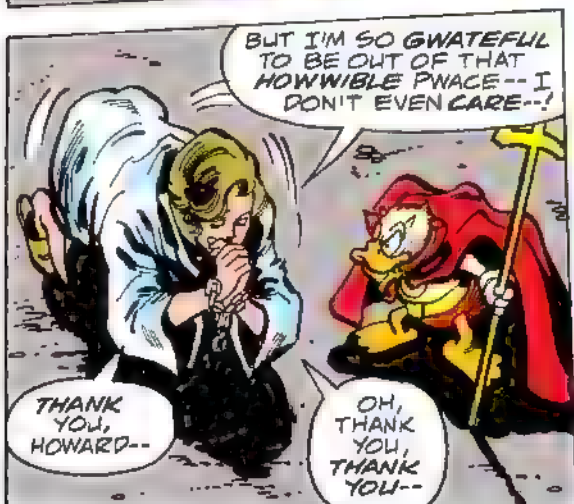
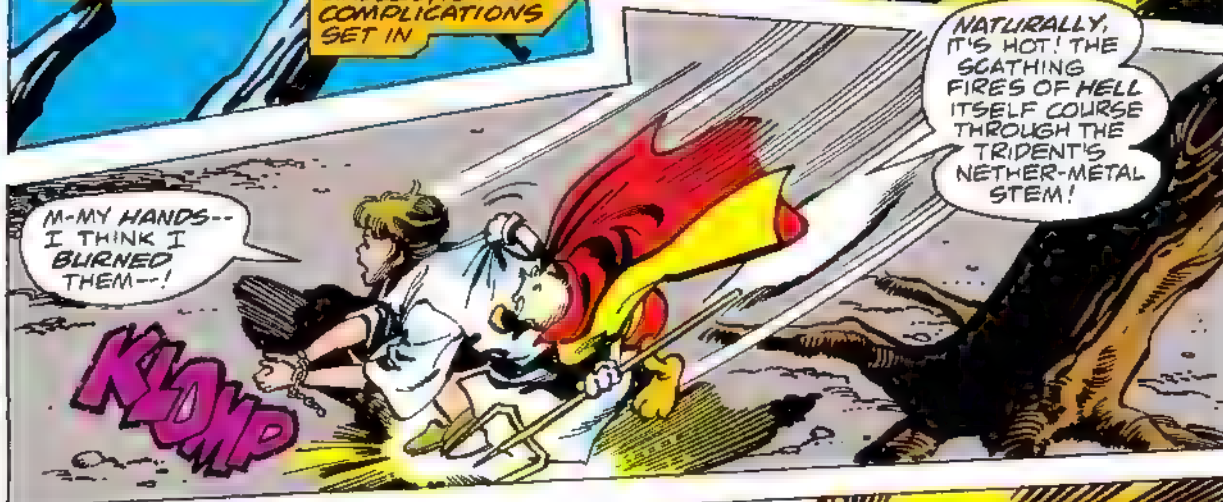
IRONICALLY, IT WAS SHE WHO'D
BELIEVED HERSELF POSSESSED
--AND ON HER BEHALF THAT DR.
MORTON AVERY SUMMONED
DAIMON HELLSTROM TO OHIO

*SEE HTD #12.--STEVE.



OF COURSE, BOTH AVERY AND HELLSTROM RECKONED WITHOUT THE INTERFERENCE OF REVEREND JOON MOON YUC AND THE HOSPITAL'S MYSTERIOUS DIRECTOR IN TREATING WINDA'S CASE.

DAIMON DIAGNOSED WINDA AS NORMAL. THE DIRECTOR DISAGREED. AND THAT, AS THEY SAY IN MED CIRCLES, IS WHEN COMPLICATIONS SET IN





SNIFLS B-BUT, HOWARD-- WHAT DID I DO?-- WHY DID YOU WAWWOP ME--?!

BECAUSE, YOU INSIPID SNIVELLING FOOL--

YOUR TAMPERING WITH THE TRIDENT IN MID-AIR JEOPARDIZED BOTH OUR LIVES--AND COULD HAVE ABORTED OUR ESCAPE!

HOWARD-- WAIT-- DON'T FWY OFF IN A SNIT--!

DON'T WEAVE ME ALL AWONE--!

"I CANNOT AFFORD TO BE SADDLED WITH THE LIKES OF YOU, WINDA," THE DEMONIC DUCK SHOUTS BACK "I'VE CARRIED YOU THIS FAR--

"--THE REST IS UP TO YOU!!"

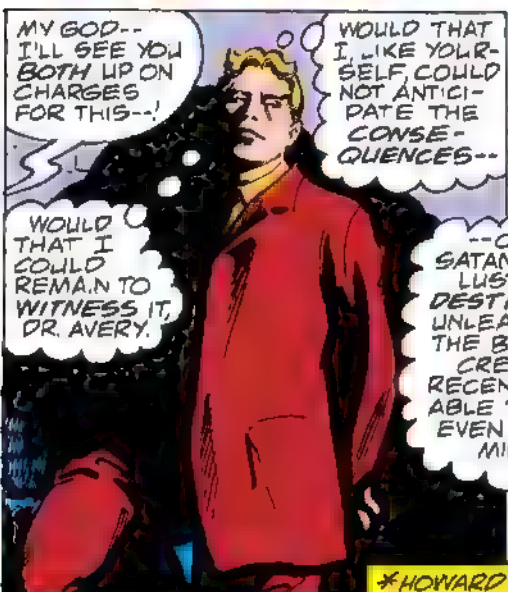
MEANWHILE, BACK IN THE BASEMENT--



YOU HAD NO RIGHT TO INTRUDE, DR AVERY! YUC'S RITUAL WAS SPECIFICALLY ORDERED BY THE DIRECTOR!

REICH AUTHORIZED YOU TO SUSPEND THE GIRL BY HER WRISTS FROM THE PIPES--?!

--TO CONFUSE AND TERRIFY HER WITH TALK OF DEMONS AND TORTURE?! AND YOU COMPLIED??



MY GOD-- I'LL SEE YOU BOTH UP ON CHARGES FOR THIS--!

WOULD THAT I, LIKE YOURSELF, COULD NOT ANTICIPATE THE CONSEQUENCES--

WOULD THAT I COULD REMAIN TO WITNESS IT, DR. AVERY.

--OF MY SATANIC SOULS LUST FOR DESTRUCTION UNLEASHED IN THE BODY OF A CREATURE RECENTLY IN-ABLE TO CONTROL EVEN HIS OWN MIND!*



IN TIME, THE FOWL'S GENUINE PERSONALITY CANNOT HELP BUT SUCCEUMB TO ITS SEVERE MENTAL FATIGUE.

*HOWARD SUFFERED A NEAR-NERVOUS BREAKDOWN IN ISH #11.-S.



AND WHEN
IT DOES--
WHEN ITS
INFLUENCE
UPON THE
DUCK'S
BEHAVIOR
IS NEGATED
COMPLETELY--

--ONLY I SHALL
STAND 'TWINX THIS
HAPLESS WORLD
AND THE WRATH
OF THE DEVIL'S
FIRST BORN!



THIS TIME YOU AND REICH HAVE
GONE TOO FAR, BARBARA!

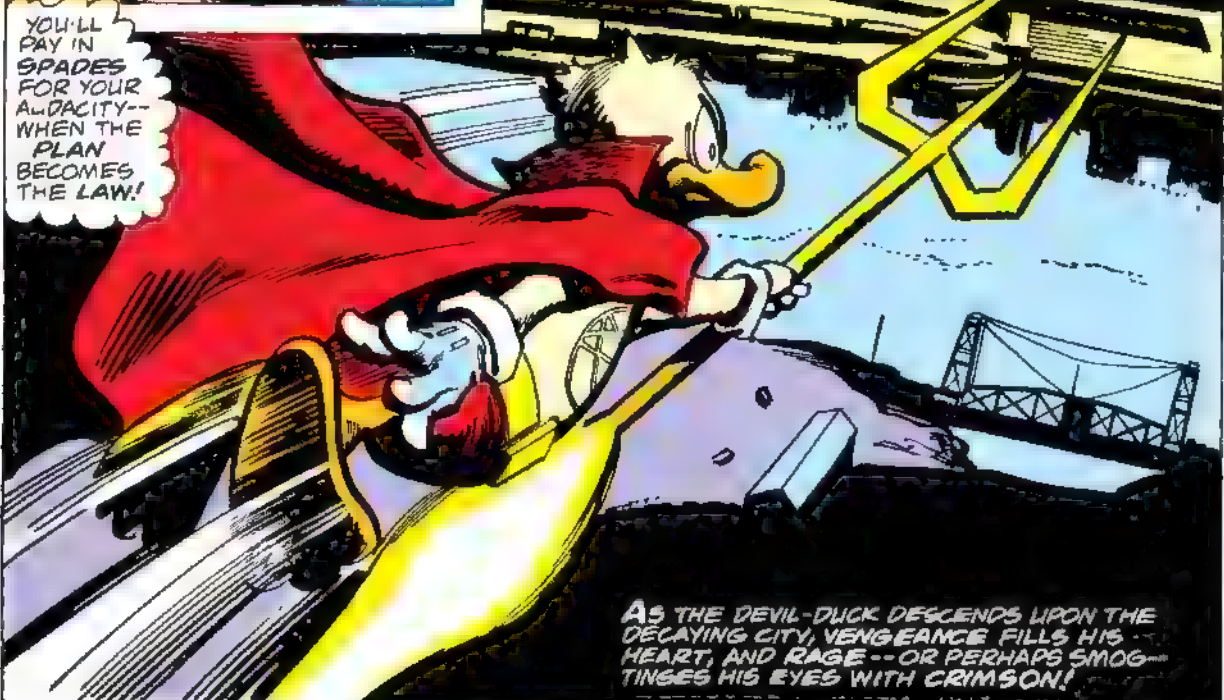
FIRST, I'M GOING
TO HAVE IT OUT WITH
HIM, FACE-TO-FACE!
IT'S ABOUT TIME I
WAS ALLOWED TO
MEET HIM--!



AND THEN, NO DOUBT, YOU'LL
NOTIFY THE STATE MENTAL
HEALTH COMMISSION, WON'T
YOU?

= SIGH= VERY WELL,
DOCTOR--DO AS
YOU WILL!

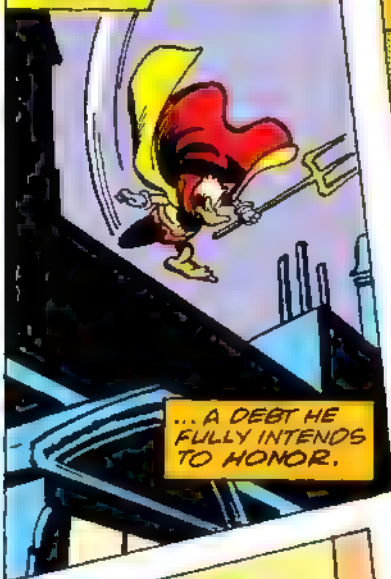
YOU'LL
PAY IN
SPADES
FOR YOUR
AUDACITY--
WHEN THE
PLAN
BECOMES
THE LAW!



CLEVELAND!

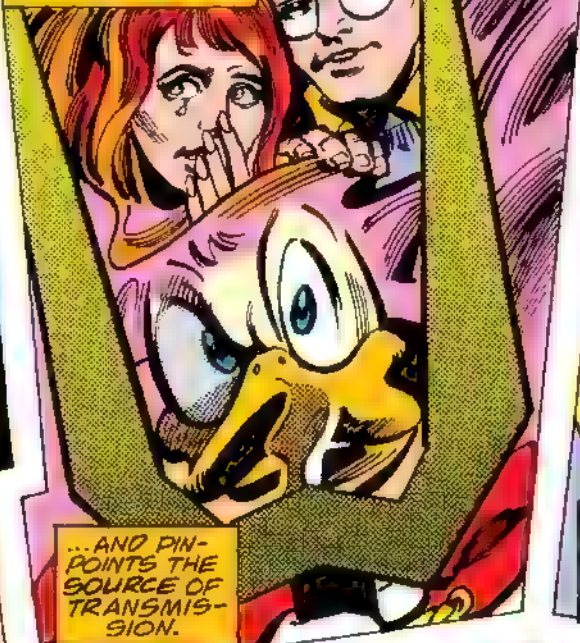
AS THE DEVIL-DUCK DESCENDS UPON THE
DECAYING CITY, VENGEANCE FILLS HIS
HEART, AND RAGE--OR PERHAPS SMOG--
TINGES HIS EYES WITH CRIMSON!

THERE'S ANOTHER HUMAN HERE TO WHOM HE OWES A DEBT OF ANGER...



... A DEBT HE FULLY INTENDS TO HONOR.

EMPLOYING THE PSYCHO-SENSITIVE PROPERTY OF THE TRIDENT, HE ATTUNES HIMSELF TO HER INDIVIDUAL PSYCHIC WAVELENGTH...



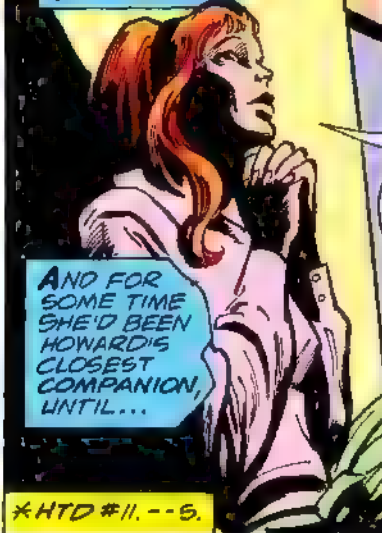
... AND PIN-POINTS THE SOURCE OF TRANSMISSION.

AND THEN, HE GRINS... NOT WITH AMUSEMENT, BUT WITH THE PERVERSE DELIGHT...



... OF A GONIF WHO'S JUST SPIED AN EASY MARK!

HER NAME IS BEVERLY SWITZLER.



AND FOR SOME TIME SHE'D BEEN HOWARD'S CLOSEST COMPANION, UNTIL...

THAT NIGHT IN THE MOTEL-- I CAN'T GET IT OFF MY MIND, PAUL!

I'VE GONE OVER IT AGAIN AND AGAIN... AND I STILL CAN'T IMAGINE WHY HOWARD DESERTED ME!*

HE'D COLLAPSED WITH EXHAUSTION... I WENT OUT WITH THE DOCTOR TO DISCUSS HIS CONDITION...



*HTD #11.--5.

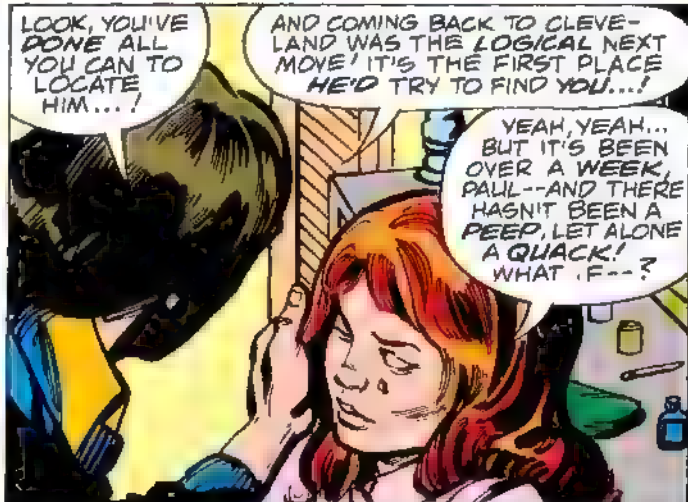
...AND WHEN I GOT BACK, HE WAS GONE!!



I KNOW, BEV... YOU'VE TOLD ME THE STORY A HUNDR--

UHM... THAT WAS UN-CALLED FOR, WASN'T IT?

LOOK, YOU'VE DONE ALL YOU CAN TO LOCATE HIM...!



AND COMING BACK TO CLEVELAND WAS THE LOGICAL NEXT MOVE! IT'S THE FIRST PLACE HE'D TRY TO FIND YOU...!

YEAH, YEAH... BUT IT'S BEEN OVER A WEEK, PAUL--AND THERE HASN'T BEEN A PEEP, LET ALONE A QUACK! WHAT, F--?

BUT BEFORE BEV CAN GIVE VOICE TO HER FEARFUL SPECULATION...

HOLY
LEAPING--!
IT'S HIM!!

CRASH

I'VE COME
FOR YOU,
BEVERLY!

JEEZ--HE
ALWAYS
DID KNOW
HOW TO
RELIEVE
ANY
GIVEN
MONOTONY.

AND NOT A MOMENT
TOO SOON, DUCKY!
IT'S SO GOOD
TO SEE YOU--

-- EVEN IF THAT
ENTRANCE IS
GONNA COST ME
A FORTUNE!

DID YOU CLOSET YOURSELF
IN A PITCHFORK FACTORY,
OR WHAT? BEV'S BEEN
WORRIED SICK!

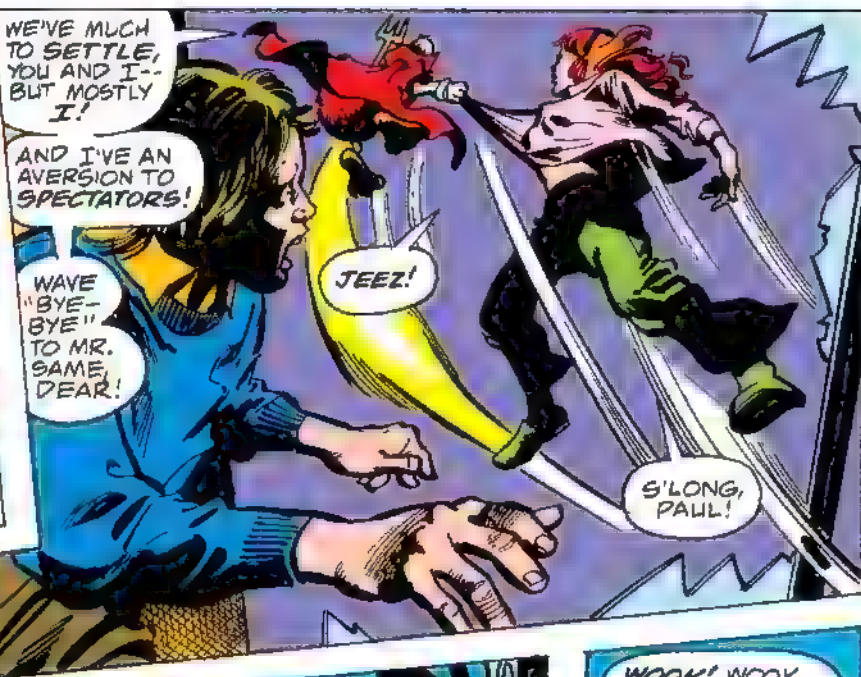
--AS TO WHY SHE
WASN'T CONCERNED WHEN
I WAS DESPERATELY ILL,
WHY SOCIALIZING WITH
THE HANDSOME YOUNG
DOCTOR WAS MORE
IMPORTANT!!

OWW!!

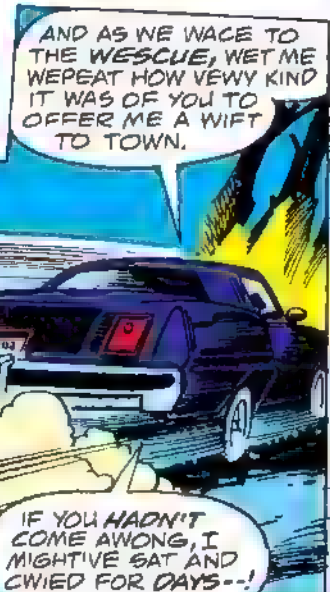
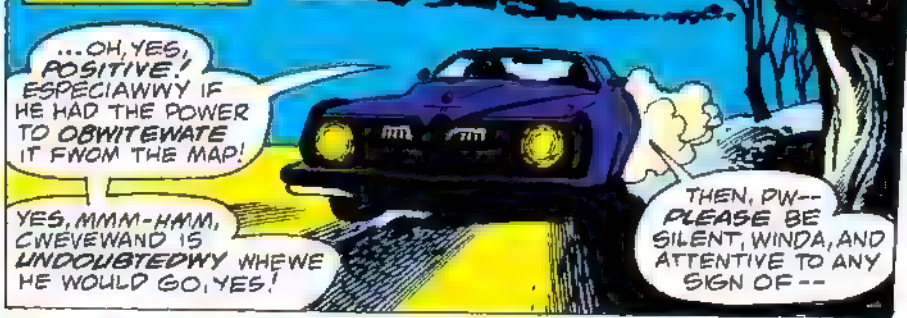
OH, SHE HAS,
HAS SHE? THEN
PERHAPS SHE'LL
ENLIGHTEN US--

YES...
I
KNOW

LEGGO,
YA
TURKEY--
THAT
HURTS!



MEANWHILE, ON A LONELY SUB-URBAN ROAD, HEADED TOWARD TOWN....!



SUNSPOT SLOPE: CLEVELAND'S POPULAR LOVER'S LANE, WHERE ACCORDING TO LEGEND, SOME YOUNG COUPLE IS STRICKEN WITH TERMINAL HICKEYS ONCE EVERY 11 YEARS.

H-HOWARD... WHY DID YOU BRING ME HERE?

SPEAK NO MORE!

BUT HOW'M I SUPPOSED TO LEARN IF I CAN'T ASK QUESTIONS?

BY LISTENING CLOSELY--TO YOUR ANSWERS.

I SHALL BE THE INQUISITOR!

AND OUR FORUM SHALL BE THIS CIRCLE OF HELLFIRE!

NOW, THEN --FIRST QUESTION:

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT ME, BEVERLY?

ANSWER!

UH--GEE, I DUNNO!

GUESS I NEVER REALLY THOUGHT ABOUT IT MUCH--

OUCH!

D-DUCKY, THAT'S MY WRIST-- NOT A DOOR-KNOB--!

ANSWER! HOW DO YOU CONCEIVE OUR RELATIONSHIP?

WHAT DO I MEAN TO YOU?

DO YOU LIKE ME--OR CHERISH ME --OR PERHAPS I MERELY AMUSE YOU?

AM I YOUR OBJECT OF RIDICULE, SWEET?

AM I??

OH, NO, HOWARD --NO!!

THEN WHAT?! TELL ME!! I DEMAND TO --EH?

SCRREEEE

IT IS A CALCULATED RISK. THE SOULFIRE CAN INSTANTLY INCINERATE HUMAN FLESH.

BUT METAL IS SOMEWHAT MORE RESISTANT.

TOO, THIS IS A SPIRITUAL RATHER THAN A PHYSICAL FLAME. ITS INTENSITY IS DIRECTLY PROPORTIONATE TO THE STRENGTH OF THE DUCK'S WILL.

SWACIOUS! YOU WAMMED WIGHT INTO HIM!!

NO, WINDA... MY FOOT WAS ON THE BRAKE.

THE INTENT WAS TO ADDLE HIS CONCENTRATION, NOT KILL HIM.

BUT I FEAR I'VE ACHIEVED ONLY MEAGER SUCCESS EVEN AT THAT!

ONCE PROVOKED, THE HELLSPAWN IS NOTORIOUSLY SINGLE-MINDED IN HIS PURSUIT OF RETRIBUTION!

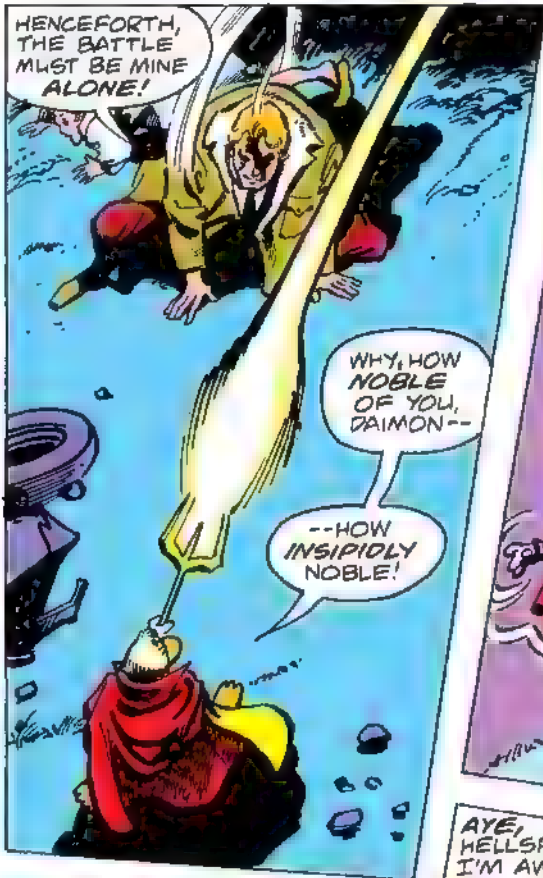
MMM-- I SEE WHAT YOU MEAN, YES I DO!

AT LEAST WE MADE POSSIBLE THAT OTHER YOUNG WOMAN'S ESCAPE!

I SUGGEST YOU JOIN HER, WINDA-- OUT OF THE LINE OF FIRE!

BUMP

BLAM



HENCEFORTH,
THE BATTLE
MUST BE MINE
ALONE!

WHY, HOW
NOBLE
OF YOU,
DAIMON--

--HOW
INSIDIOLY
NOBLE!

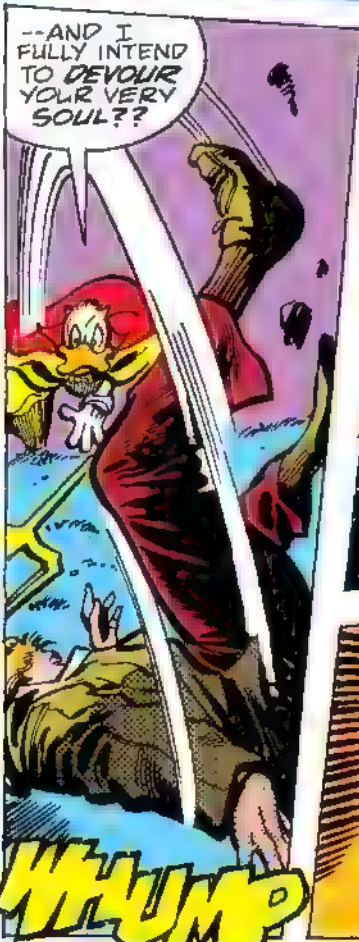


YOU'RE COGNIZANT,
THEN, THAT YOU'VE
BROUGHT ABOUT
PRECISELY WHAT
YOU'D HOPED TO
AVOID--

--THAT YOUR
STUNT-CAR
HEROICS HAVE
THRUST THE
DUCK'S PER-
SONALITY INTO
THE UNCON-
SCIOUS--



--THAT I AM
THE SON OF
SATAN!



--AND I
FULLY INTEND
TO DEVOUR
YOUR VERY
SOUL??

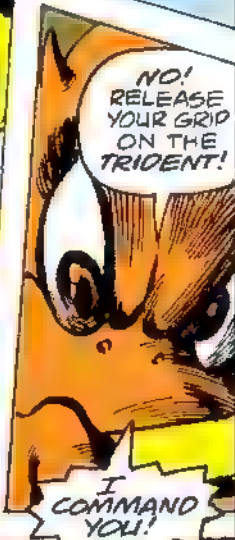


AYE,
HELLSPAWN,
I'M AWARE OF
ALL THAT--

SSSSSSSS

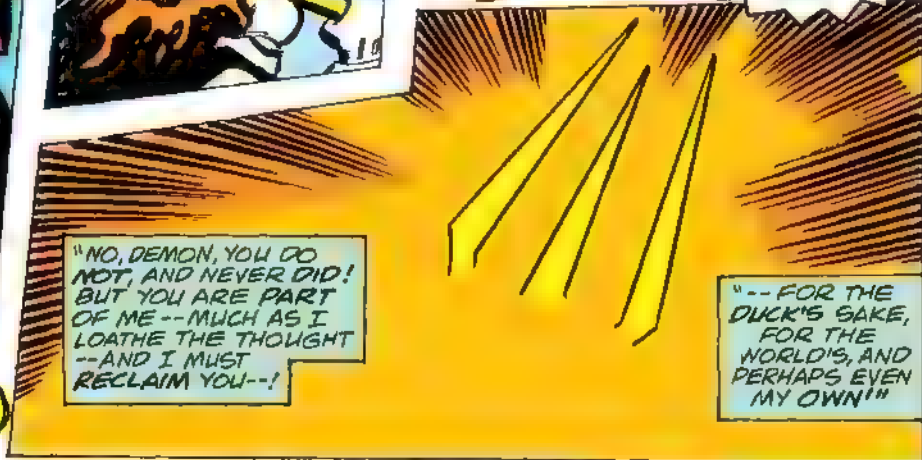


--AND
MORE!



NO!
RELEASE
YOUR GRID
ON THE
TRIDENT!

I
COMMAND
YOU!



"NO, DEMON, YOU DO
NOT, AND NEVER DID!
BUT YOU ARE PART
OF ME--MUCH AS I
LOATHE THE THOUGHT
--AND I MUST
RECLAIM YOU--!"

"--FOR THE
DUCK'S SAKE,
FOR THE
WORLD'S, AND
PERHAPS EVEN
MY OWN!"

WHUMP



IT IS DONE. THE DEMON OCCUPIES ITS RIGHTFUL HOST ONCE MORE...

-- DRAWN BACK THROUGH THE NETHER-METAL TRIDENT INTO MYSELF!

BUT ALAS, THAT SHIMMERING MIST DISPERSING IN THE BREEZE....!



UH, EXCUSE ME, BUT... ARE YOU?... IS HE?... OKAY, HUH?

IN A WORD:
NO.



THE FOWL'S SOUL PROVED TOO DEBILITATED...

...TO ENDURE THE RIGORS OF THE DEMON'S VIOLENT DEPARTURE.

THAT CURIOUS MIST-- WAS HOWARD'S DISCARNATE SELF.

YOU MEAN-- HE'S DEAD?!



NO, HIS BODY FUNCTIONS CONTINUE. BUT UNLESS I CAN GATHER THOSE WIND-SCATTERED PARTICLES OF SPIRIT...

... AND RETURN THEM TO THE DUCK'S CORPOREAL FORM...

... WELL, I BELIEVE THE COLLOQUIALISM IS STILL "VEGETABLE!" IS IT NOT?

OH, HOW TWAGIC!!

PERHAPS... BUT IT'S ALSO AN EDUCATION FEW BEINGS HAVE BEEN PRIVILEGED TO EXPERIENCE.

AS DAIMON SOON DISCOVERS, HOWARD'S PSYCHIC MIST, DISSEMINATED ON THE WIND, HAS SETTLED GENTLY, IMPERCEPTIBLY UPON OTHERS IN THE VICINITY, INSINUATING ITSELF INTO THEIR HEARTS AND MINDS!

SUDDENLY, THE DUCK FINDS HIMSELF LEADING A THOUSAND LIVES AT ONCE-- PERCEIVING THE UNIVERSE THROUGH SENSES AND SENSIBILITIES NOT HIS OWN!

AND IT'S PRETTY DISCONCERTING AT FIRST-- THIS BEING AT ONE WITH CLEVELAND-- THIS INITIAL INABILITY TO DISCERN SYMBOL FROM PHENOMENON.

THE INFLUX OF DATA IS TOO RAPID, TOO MASSIVE-- AND HIS PRESENCE IS TOO DIFFUSE TO PERMIT COMMUNICATION.

HE MUST CONTENT HIMSELF TO OBSERVE-- AND FEEL-- AND BE-- WITH THESE ACCIDENTAL SOUL-MATES.

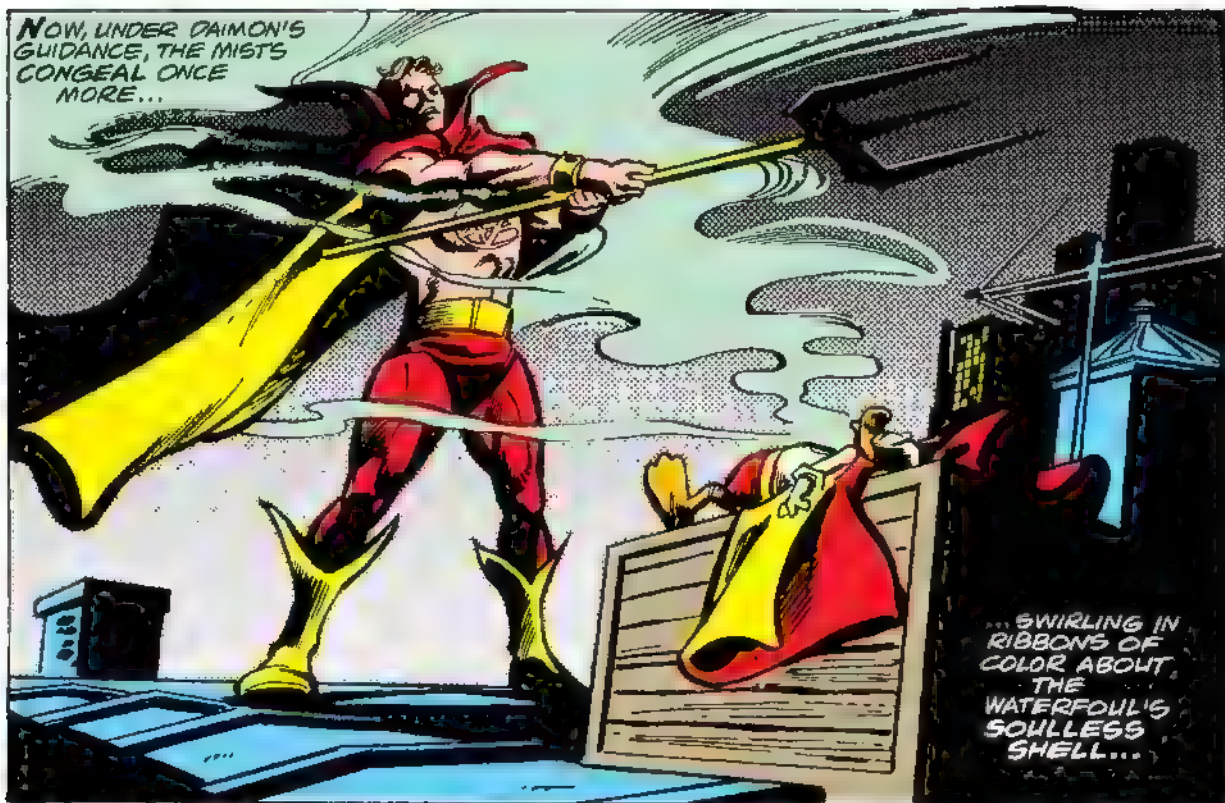
THE STREET PUNK, WHO SEES A PREDATOR IN EVERY SHADOW-- WHO KNOWS THE BIG BAD WORLD EXISTS JUST TO EAT HIM ALIVE-- UNLESS HE CHEWS IT UP AND SPITS IT OUT FIRST.

THE ASSEMBLY-LINE WORKER, WHO KNOWS HIS HEAD LONG AGO BECAME A PART OF SOMEBODY'S CAR.

THE HOUSEWIFE, WHOSE GRAVE RESPONSIBILITIES ARE ALL THAT'S KEEPING HER AFLOAT.

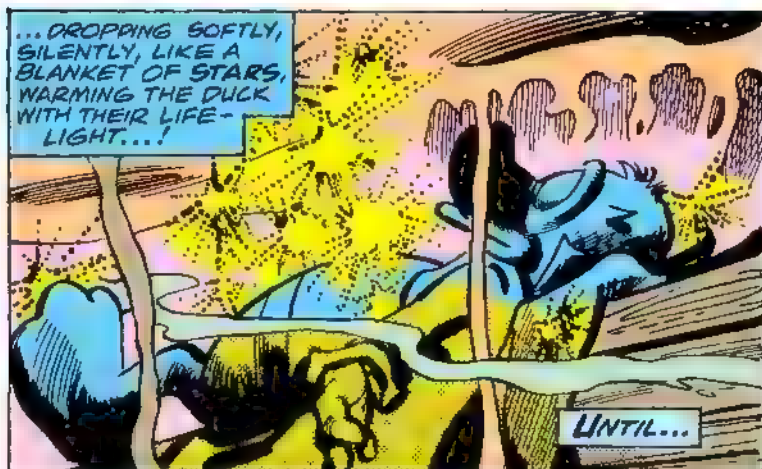
THE EX-EXECUTIVE, EJECTED FROM HIS ENCAPSULATED EXISTENCE WITHOUT LIFE-SUPPORT, SORRY, BUDGET CUT!

THE GRANDFATHER WHO KNOWS HE POSSESSES NO WISDOM TO PASS ON TO HIS HEIRS, JUST JOKES, AND THE GRANDSON, WHO KNOWS IT, TOO-- BUT THINKS THEY'RE FUNNY.



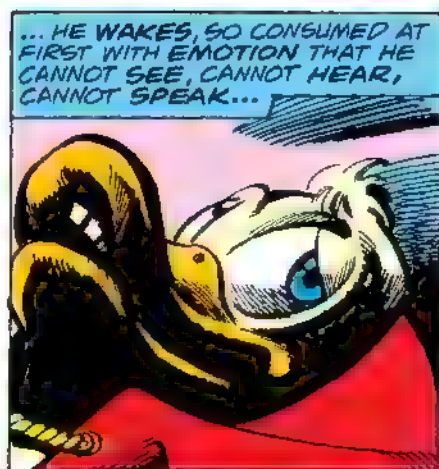
NOW, UNDER DAIMON'S
GUIDANCE, THE MISTS
CONGEAL ONCE
MORE...

...SWIRLING IN
RIBBONS OF
COLOR ABOUT
THE
WATERFOUL'S
SOULLESS
SHELL...

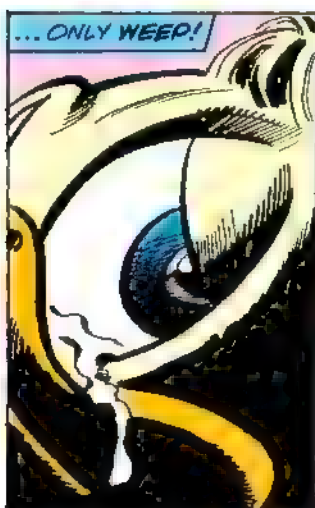


...DROPPING SOFTLY,
SILENTLY, LIKE A
BLANKET OF STARS,
WARMING THE DUCK
WITH THEIR LIFE-
LIGHT...!

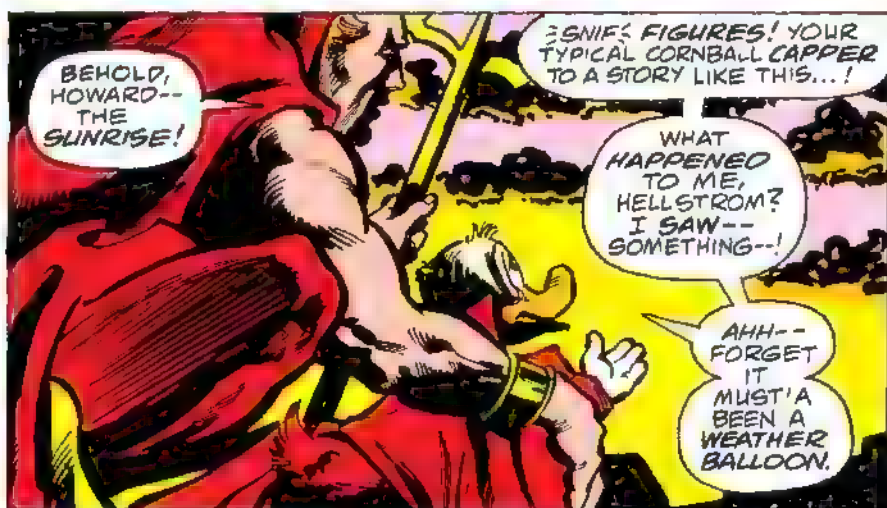
UNTIL...



...HE WAKES, SO CONSUMED AT
FIRST WITH EMOTION THAT HE
CANNOT SEE, CANNOT HEAR,
CANNOT SPEAK...



... ONLY WEEP!



BEHOLD,
HOWARD--
THE
SUNRISE!

SNIF! FIGURES! YOUR
TYPICAL CORNBALL CAPPER
TO A STORY LIKE THIS...!

WHAT
HAPPENED
TO ME,
HELLSTROM?
I SAW--
SOMETHING--!

AHH--
FORGET
IT
MUST'A
BEEN A
WEATHER
BALLOON.

EPILOG:

WELL... WHAT'S THE VERDICT? DO HOWARD AND WINDA GO BACK TO THE ASYLUM--?

OR DO I GET TO KEEP THEM?

WE'RE GONNA BE BOARDERS, PAUL-- NOT SLAVES!

TELL 'EM WE PROMISE TO HOLD WEEKLY GROUP THERAPY SESSIONS!

NO NEED, MS. SWITZLER. DR. AVERY HAS ALREADY SIGNED THE NECESSARY PAPERS FOR THEIR DISCHARGE.

WEAWWY?! OH, JOY!! WE'RE FREE!!

THEN IT'S OFFICIAL! WE'RE REUNITED, DUCKY! THE PARTNERSHIP'S BACK ON!

=waaaaugh=

HE'S DONE IT, HERR DOKTOR-- SIGNED THEIR RELEASES!

AND BACK AT THE HOSPITAL...

IN DIRECT DISOBEDIENCE OF MEIN ORDERS! VERY VELL!

THEN YOU AGREE, HERR DOKTOR?

JAH, YUC! DER TIME HAS COME TO MOBILIZE!

PREPARE TO EVACUATE ZESE PREMISES, BARBARA--

--UND RELOCATE DER OPERATION TO REV. YUC'S PRIVATE UNIVERSITY!

JAWOHL... NOW "DR REICH" VILL DISAPPEAR MIT-OUT DER TRACE, TO MAKE ROOM FOR-- DER VON--DER ONLY--!!

NEXT: THE HTD ANNUAL #1 WITH "BAD NIGHT IN BAGMOM!"

THEN THE ISLAND OF DR. BONG! IN HTD #15 --ON SALE SOON!

HOWARD THE DUCK
ANNUAL

1

1977
02990

MARVEL
COMICS
GROUP

KING-SIZE ANNUAL!



50¢
©

EVER WONDER
WHAT TRANSPIRES
ON THE
1,002nd
ARABIAN
NIGHT?

HOWARD THE DUCK



THE THIEF OF
BAGMOM!

From the time of his hatching, he was...different. A potentially brilliant scholar who dreaded the structured environment of school, he educated himself in the streets, taking whatever work was available, formulating his philosophy of self from what he learned of the world about him. And then the Cosmic Axis shifted...and that world *changed*. Suddenly, he was stranded in a universe he could not fathom. Without warning, he became a strange fowl in an even stranger land.

Stan Lee PRESENTS: **HOWARD THE DUCK!**™

REUNITED AT LAST!
THE CREATIVE TEAM WHO
HATCHED THE WONDROUS
WATERFOWL BACK IN
(GASP!) 1973!

VAL MAYERIK and STEVE GERBER
ARTIST WRITER / EDITOR

JOE ROSEN, LETTERER

JAN COHEN, COLORIST

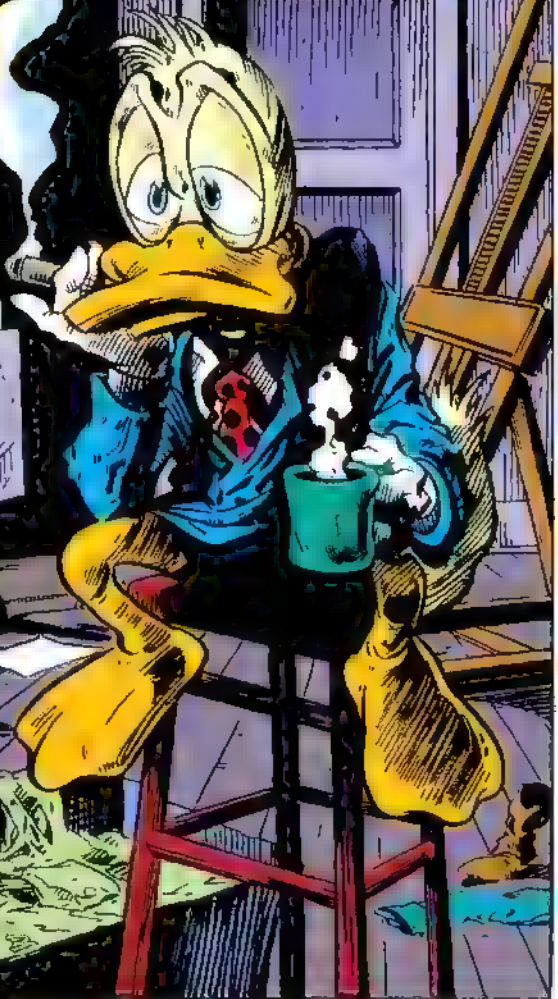
M. SKRENES, CO-SCENARIST

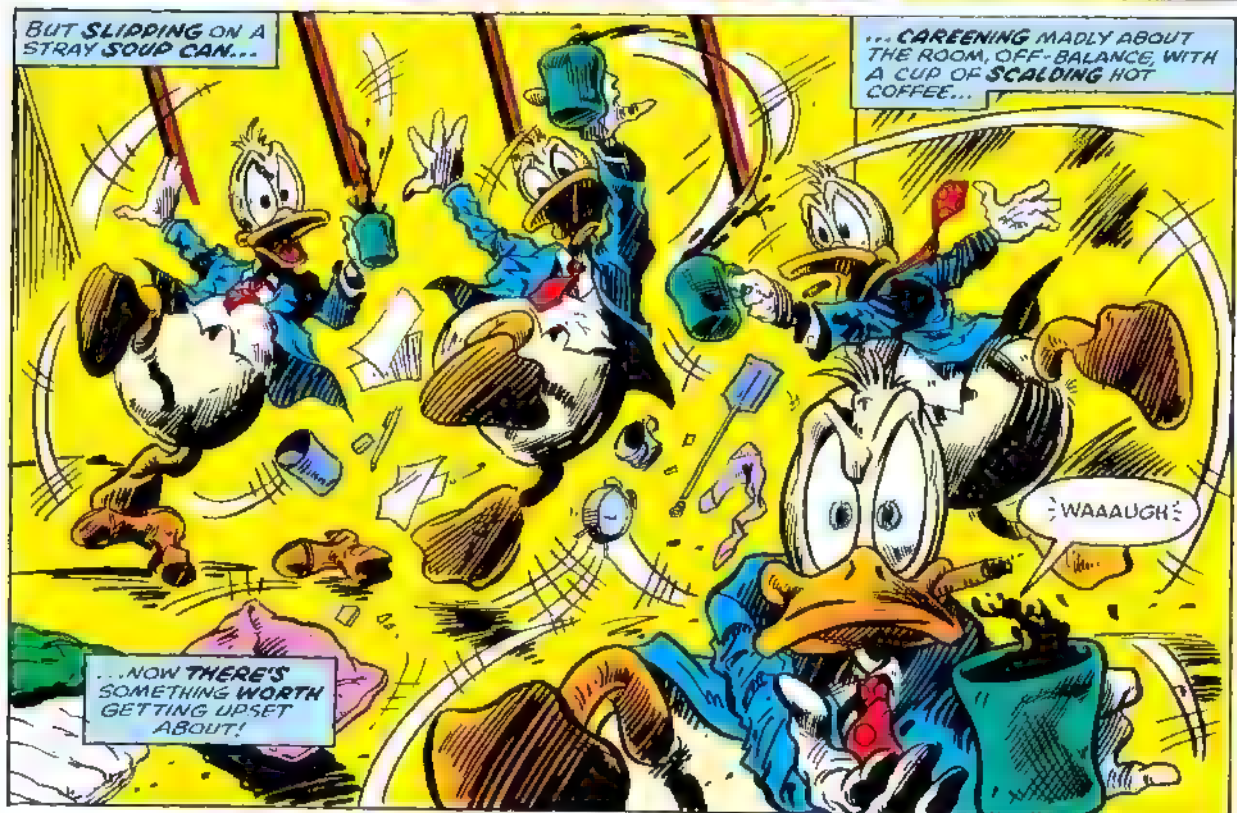
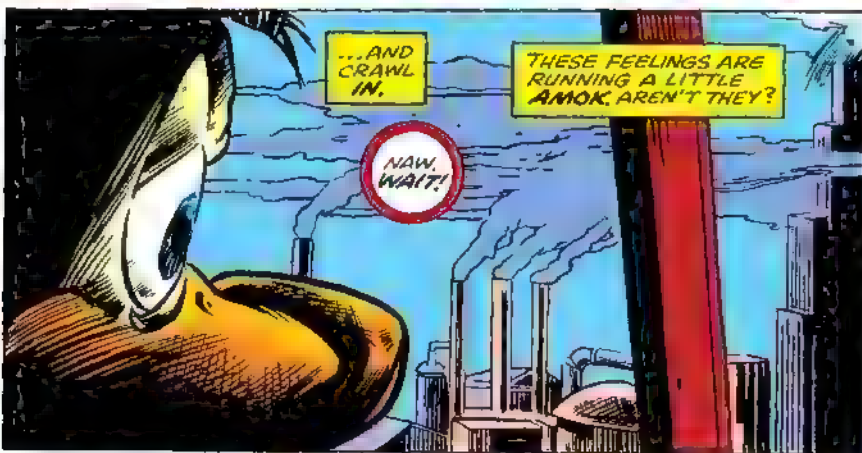
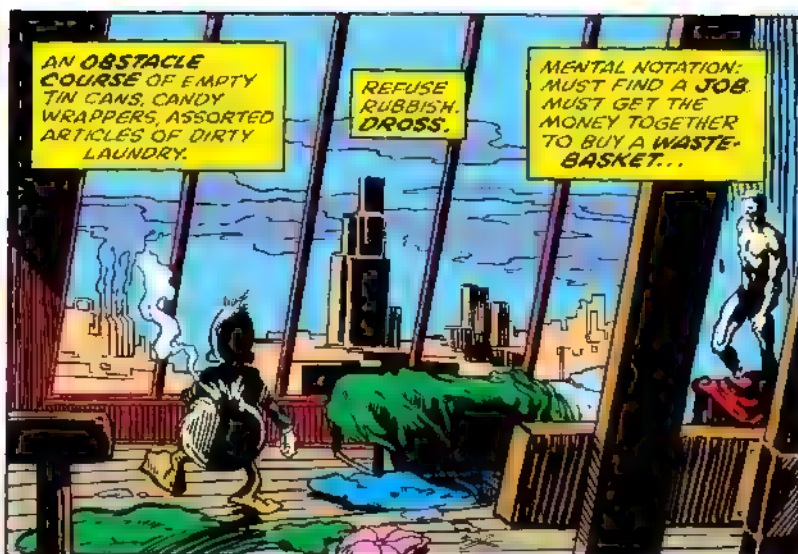
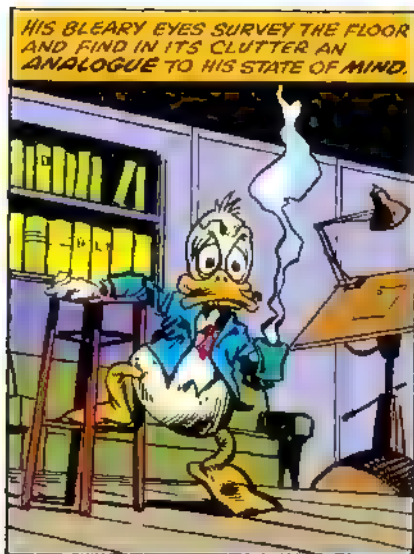
THIEF OF BAGMOM!

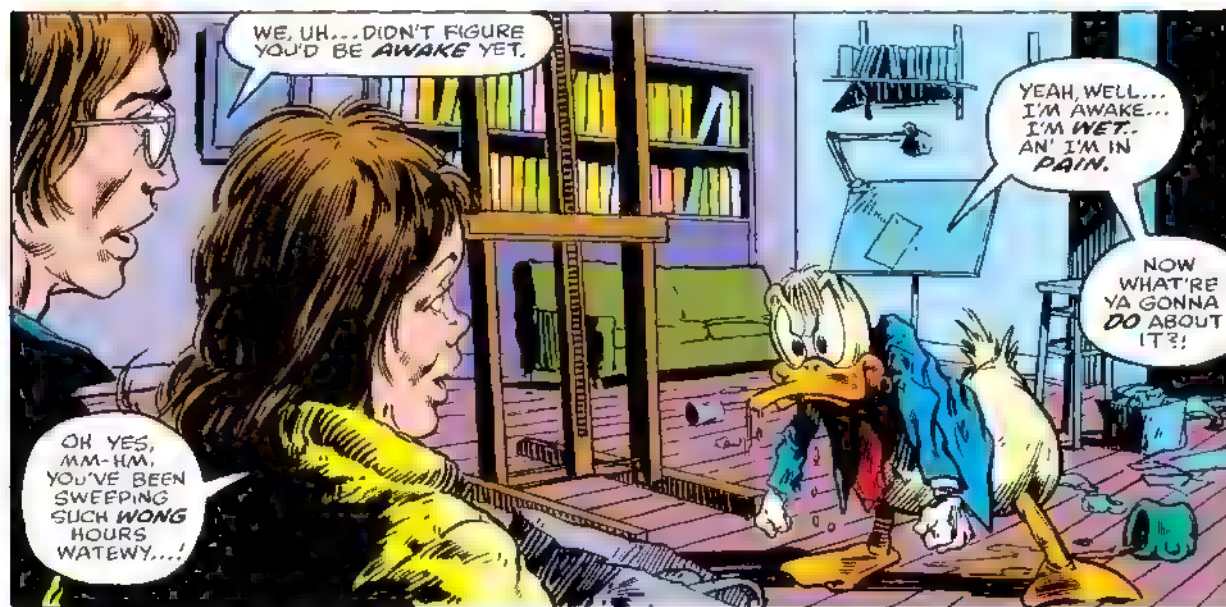
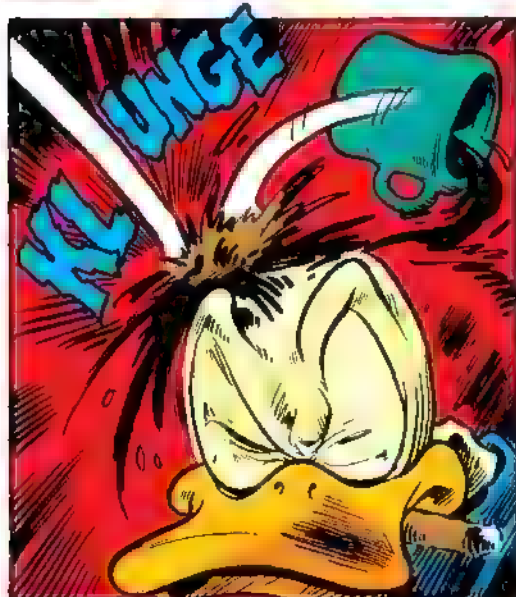
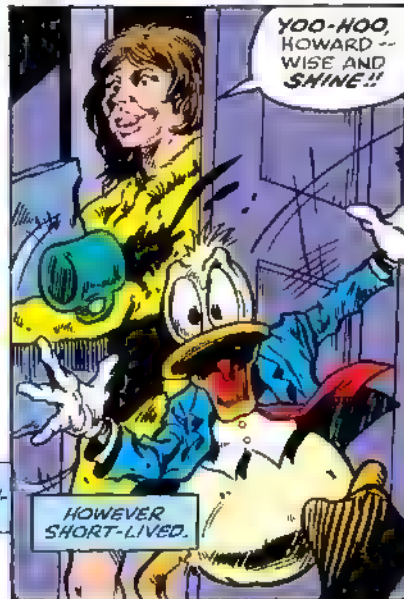
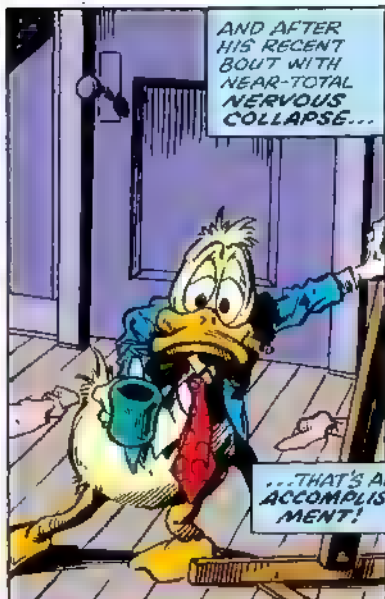
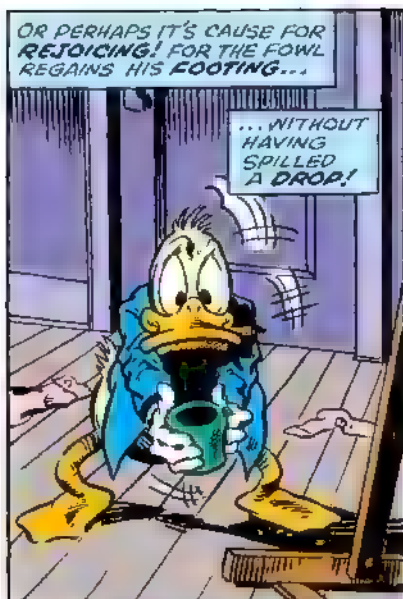
"DIDN'T WANT TO
WAKE YOU," THE
NOTE READ. "WENT
SHOPPING. HOME
BY SIX. -- BEV,
PAUL & WINDA."

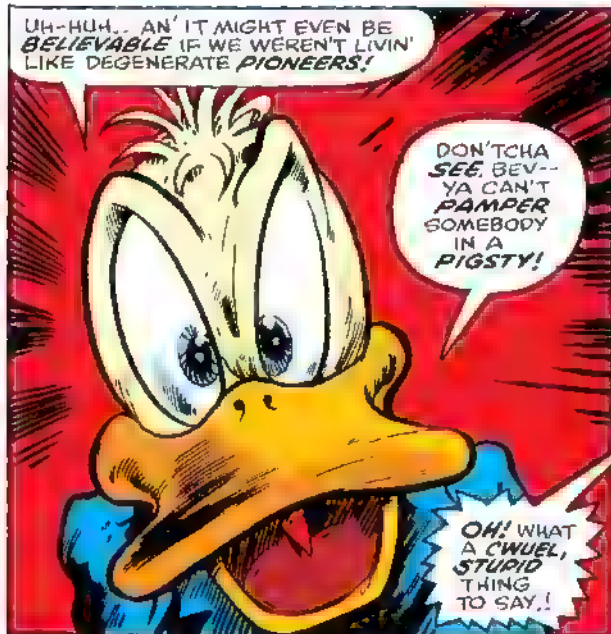
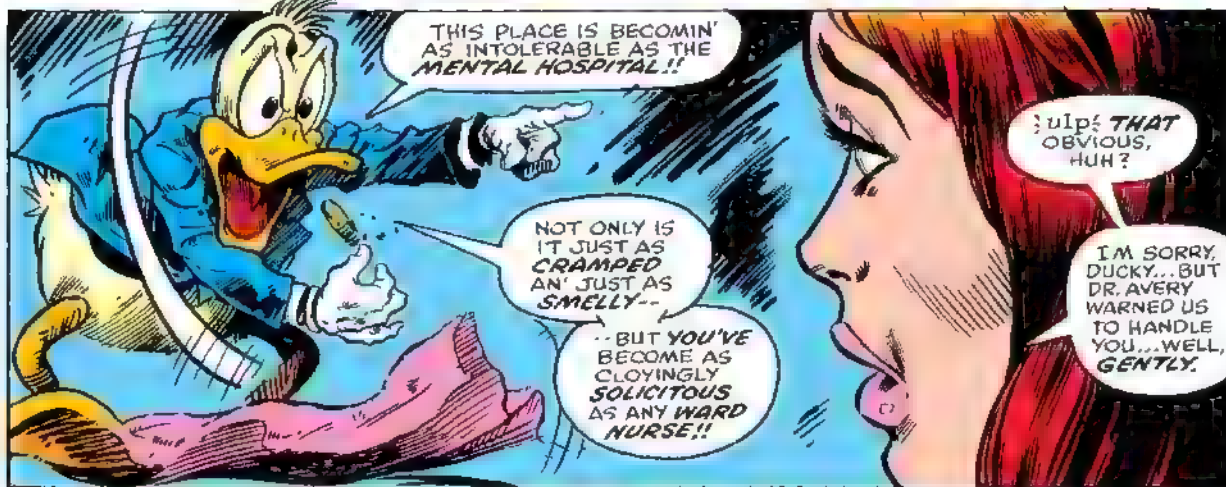
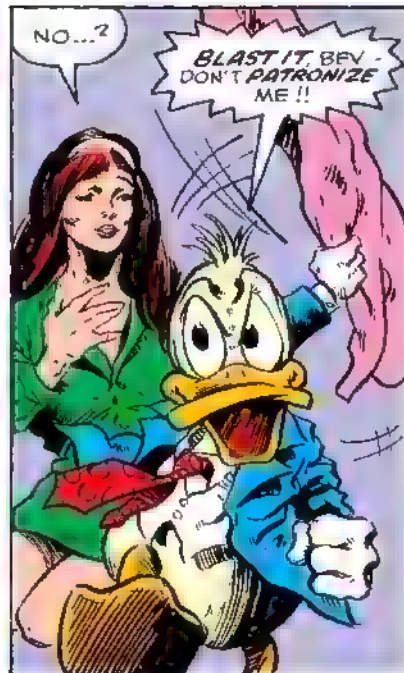
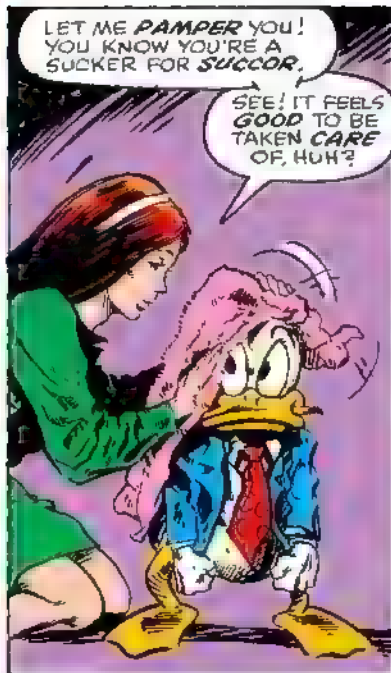
AND THAT'S HOW A DUCK
FINDS HIMSELF ALONE
IN THE WANING LIGHT OF
A CLEVELAND SATURDAY...

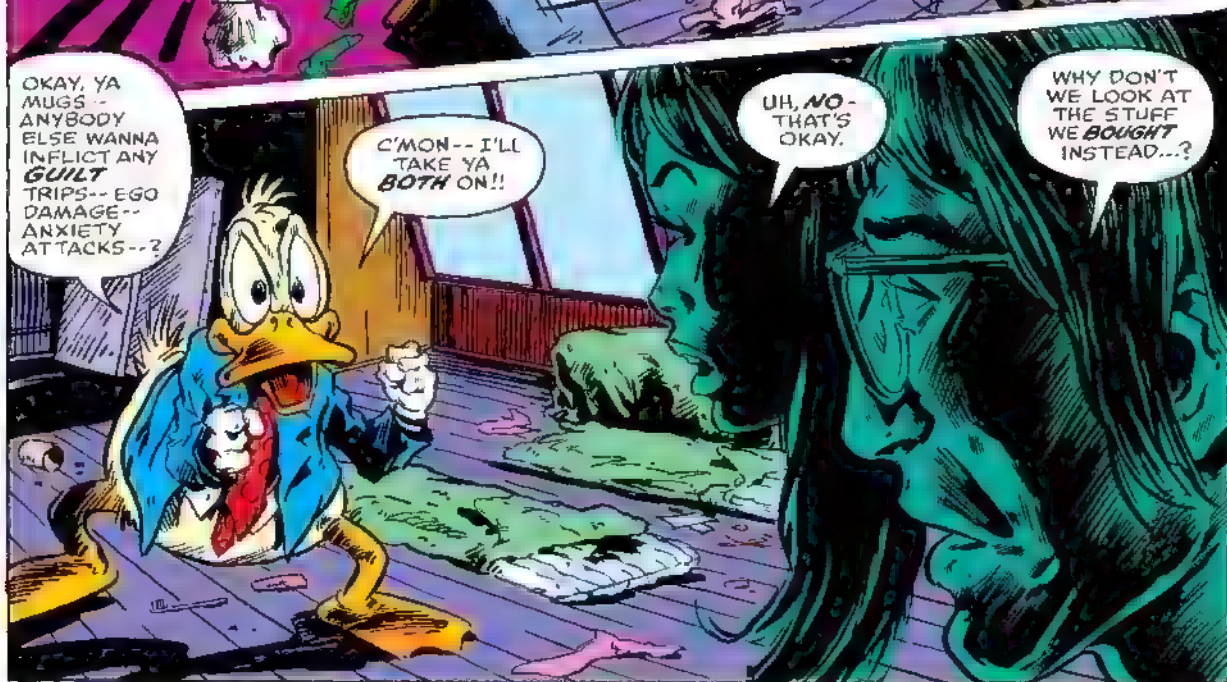
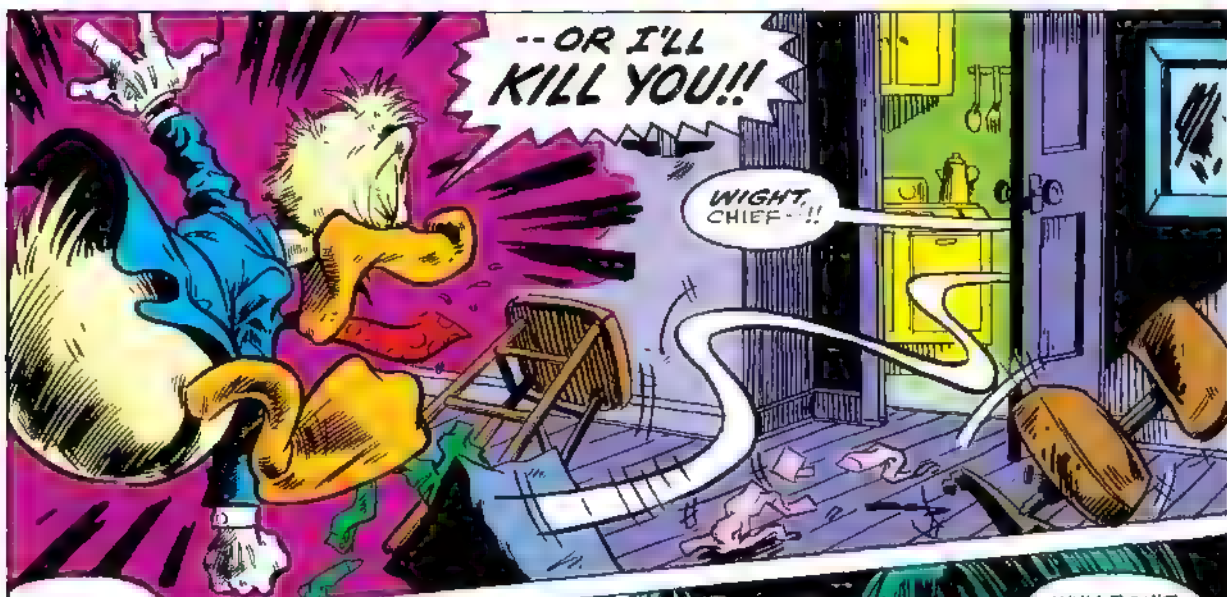
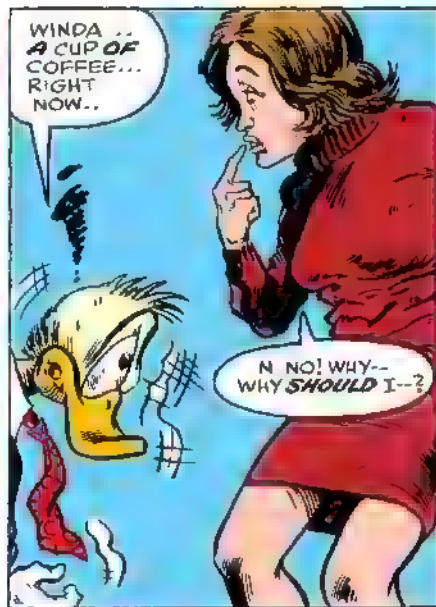
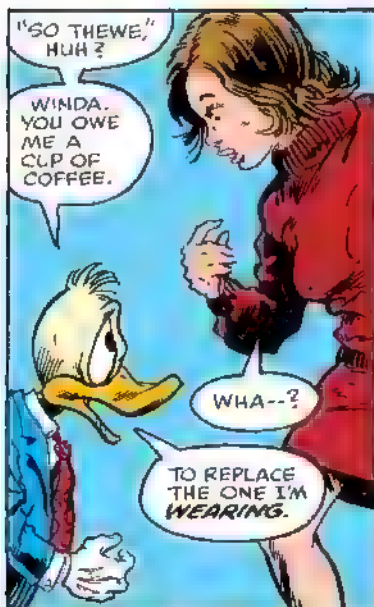
...AMID THE
DEBRIS OF EIGHT
WEEKS' COMMUNAL
LIVING IN THE ONE-ROOM
APARTMENT HE
SHARES WITH
THREE HAIRLESS
APES.

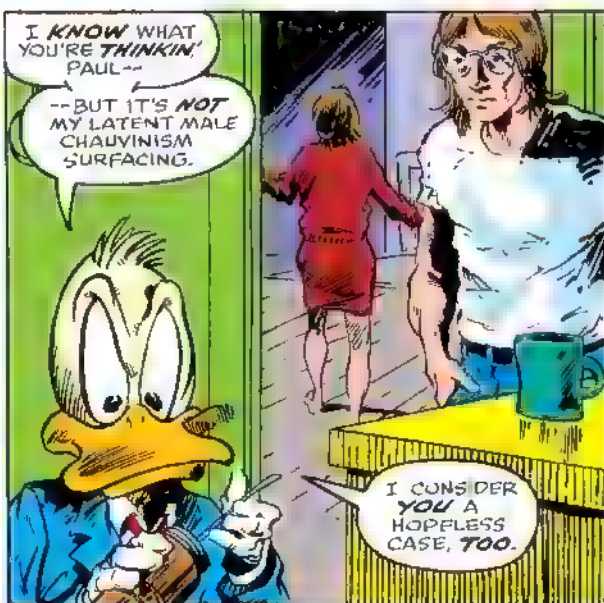
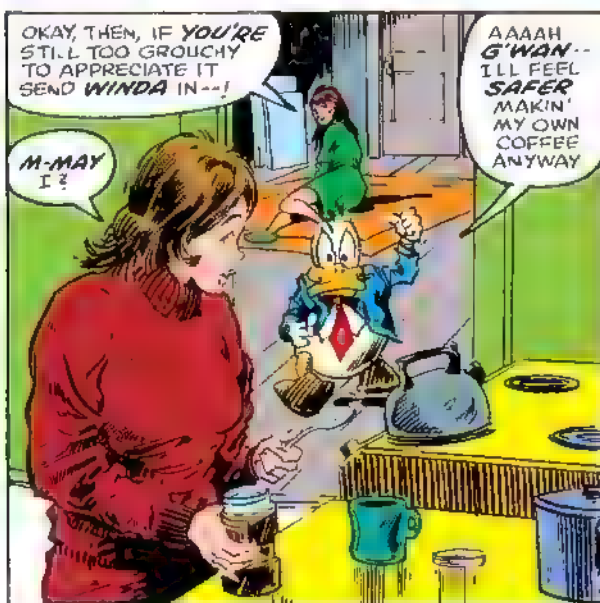
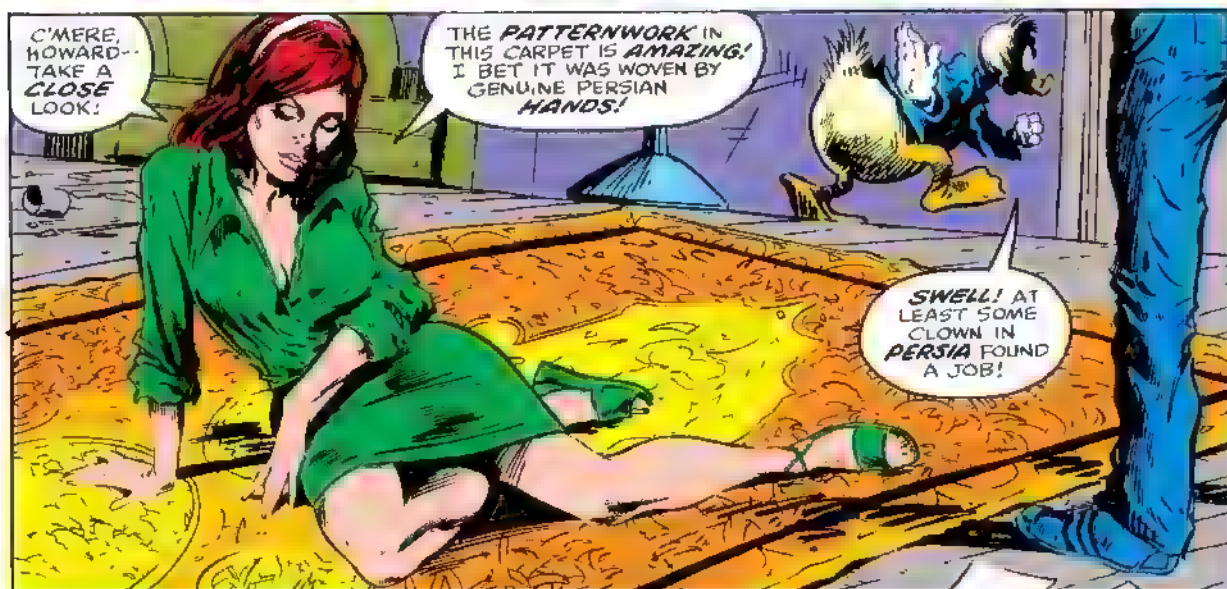
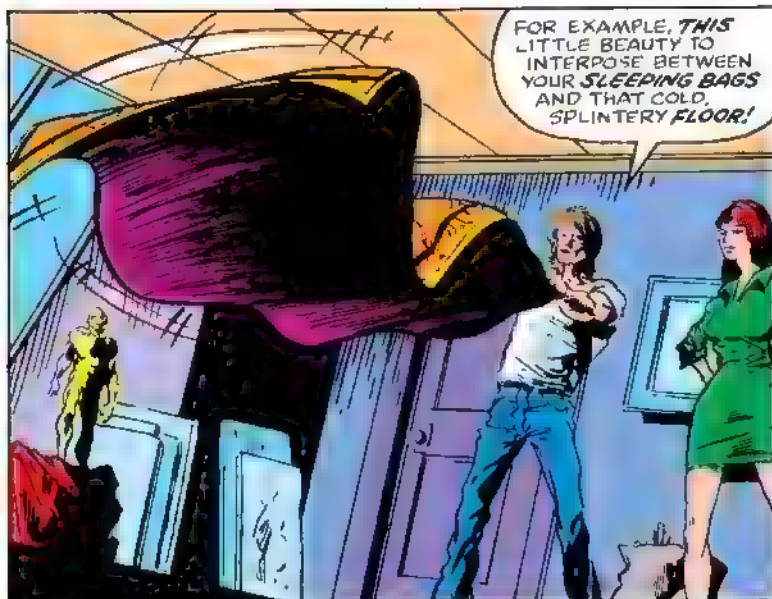


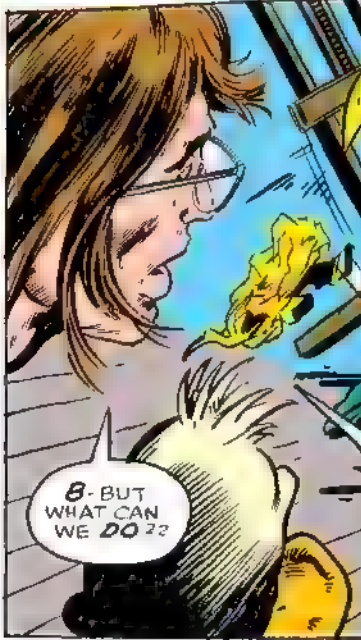
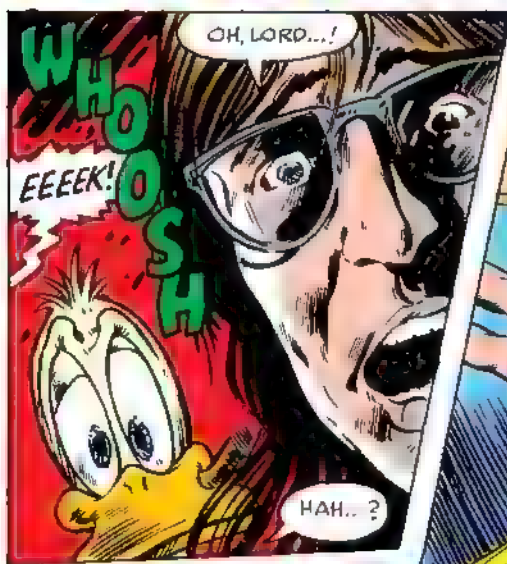
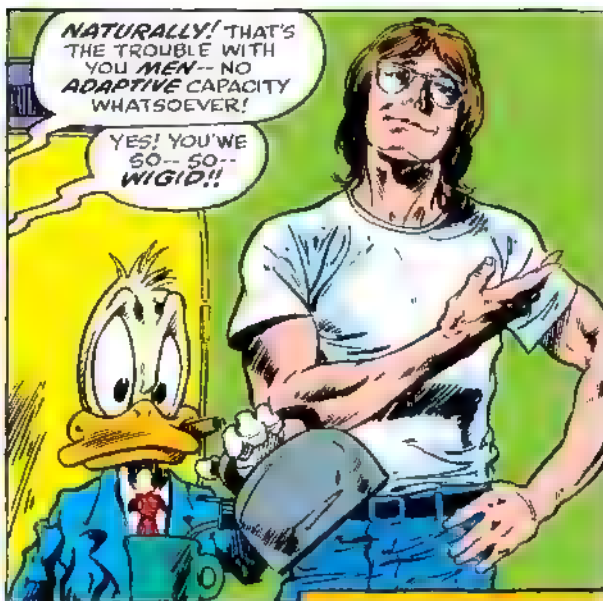
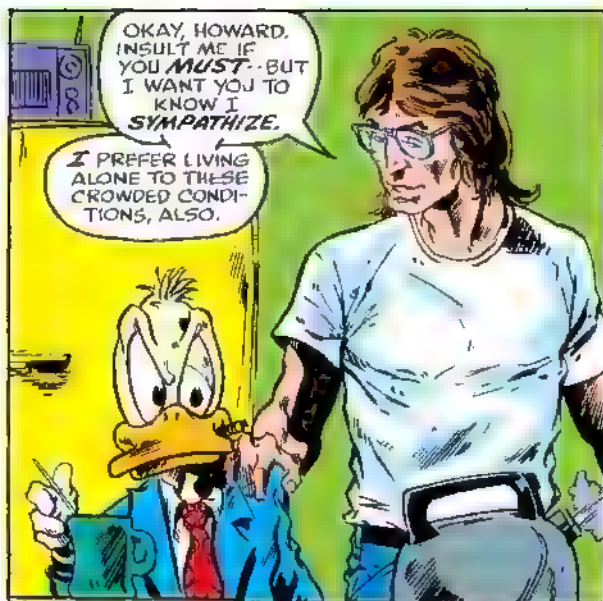












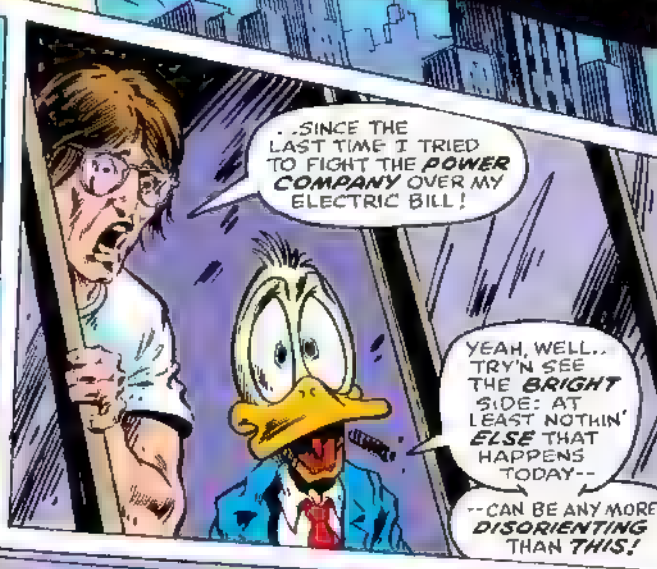


THEN-- WIKE
IT OR **NOT**
WE'VE GOING
ON A **TWIP!**



IT-- IT'S PICKING
UP SPEED--
ALTITUDE PRETTY
SOON THEY'LL
BE OUT OF SIGHT
COMPLETELY!

I HAVEN'T
FELT SO
STUPIDLY
IMPOTENT...



...SINCE THE
LAST TIME I TRIED
TO FIGHT THE **POWER**
COMPANY OVER MY
ELECTRIC BILL!

YEAH, WELL..
TRY'N SEE
THE **BRIGHT**
SIDE: AT
LEAST NOTHIN'
ELSE THAT
HAPPENS
TODAY--

-- CAN BE ANY MORE
DISORIENTING
THAN **THIS!**



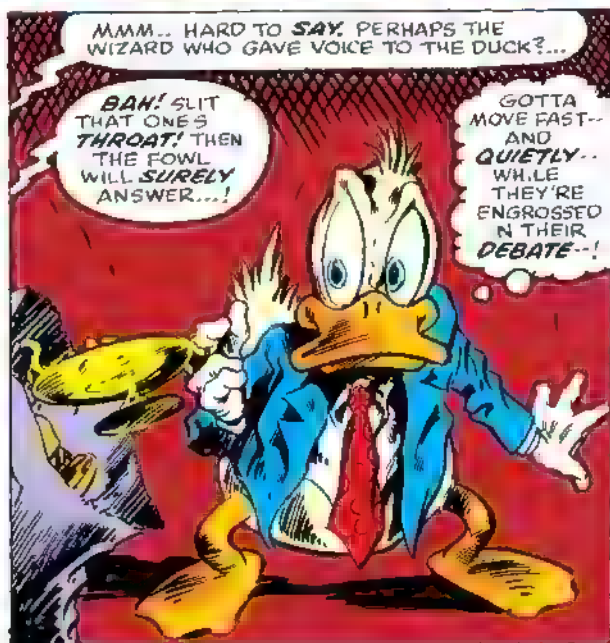
SUDDENLY--

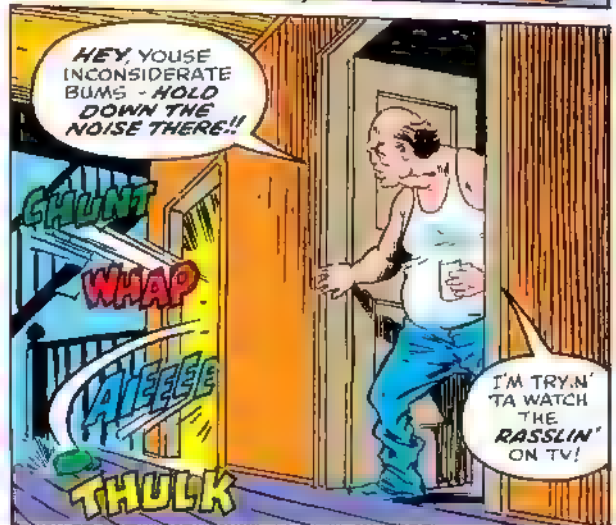
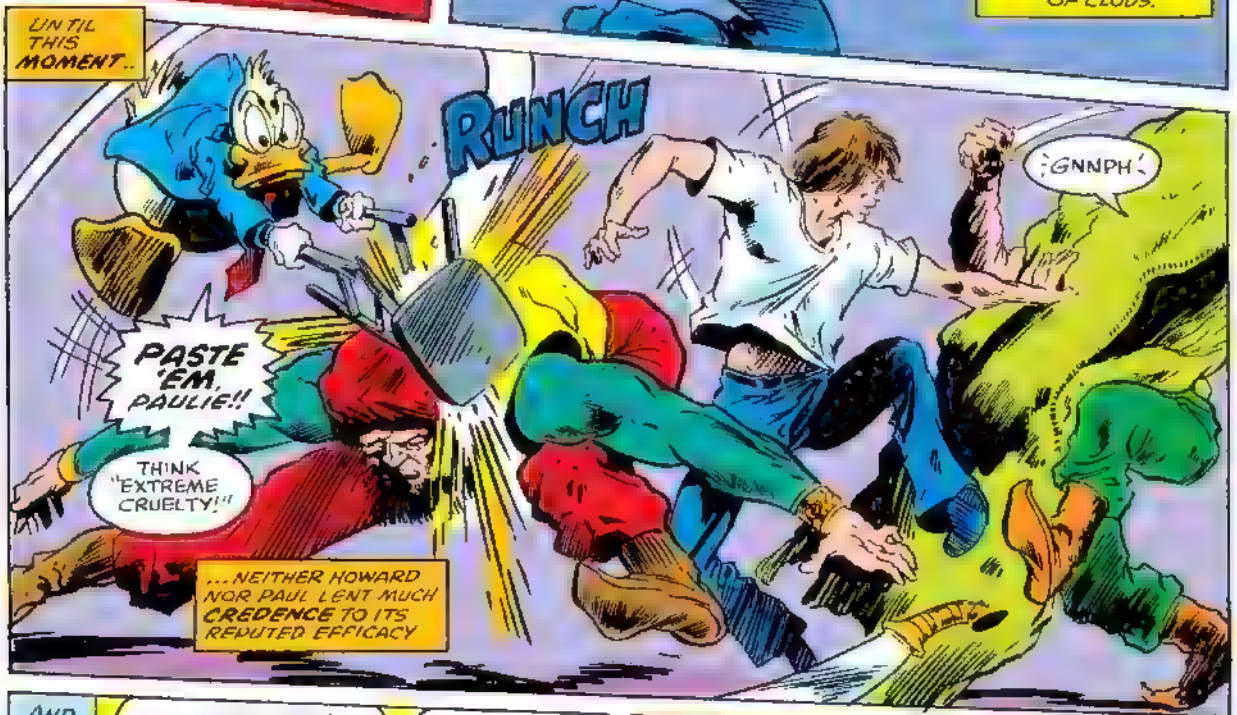
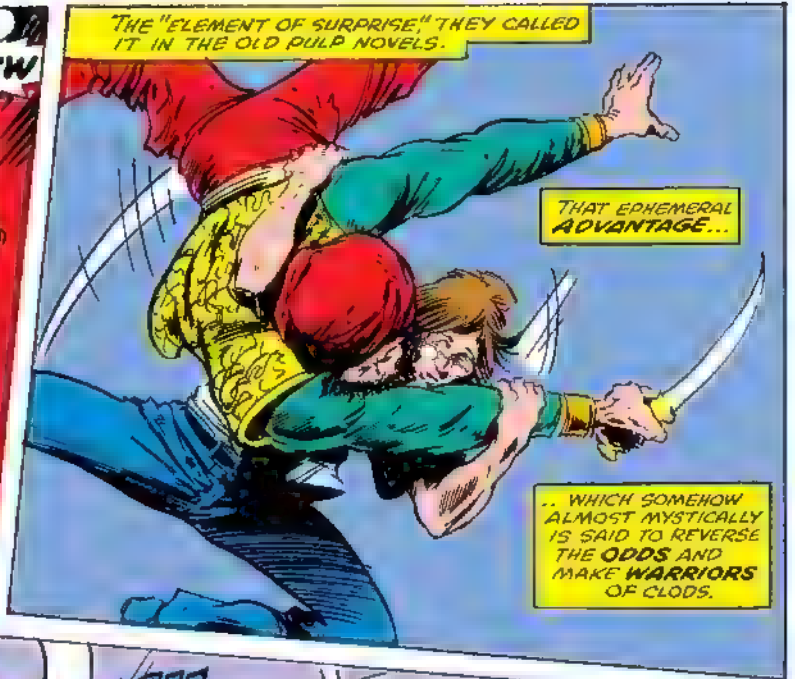
I SHOULDA
KNOWN--
THE MINUTE I
EVINCE EVEN
A **TRACE** OF
OPT MISM--!

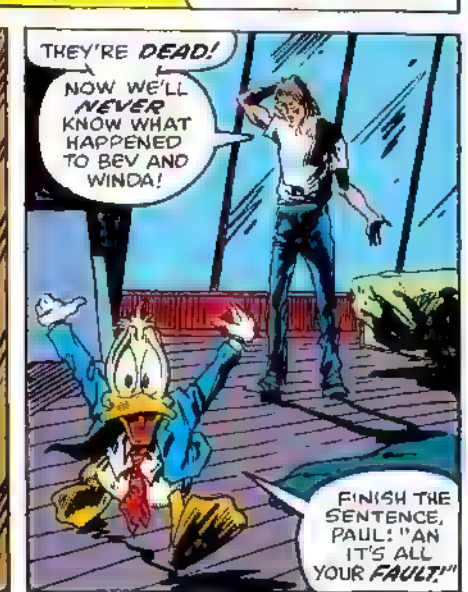
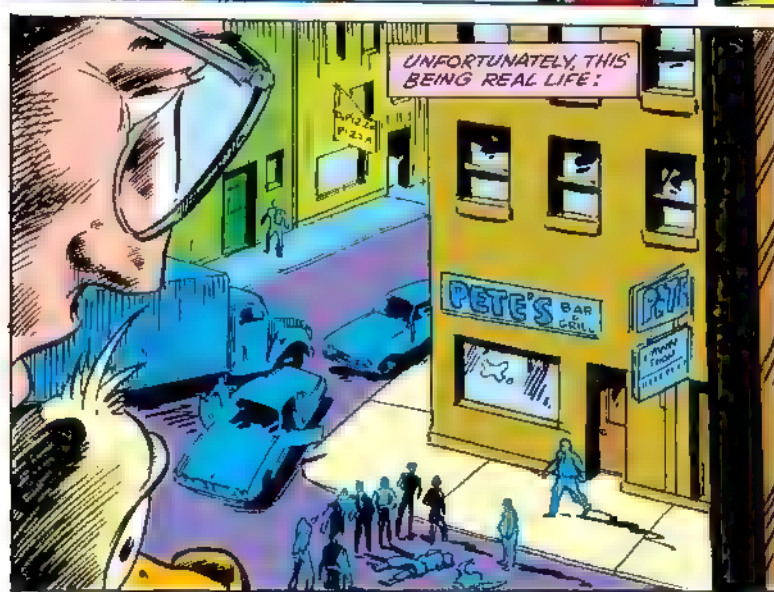
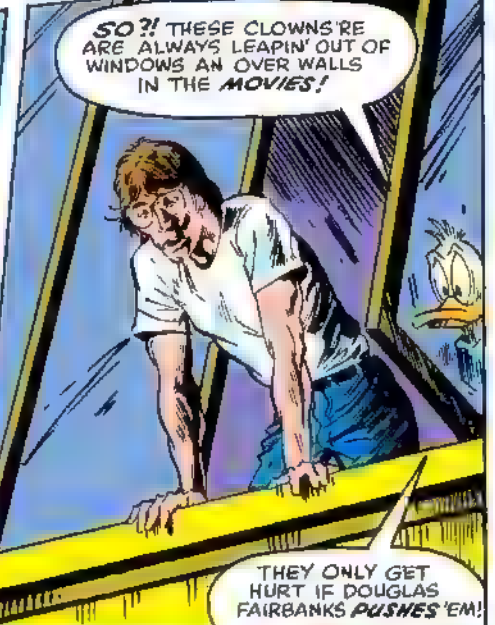
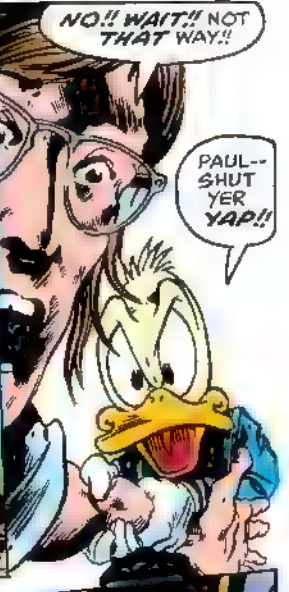


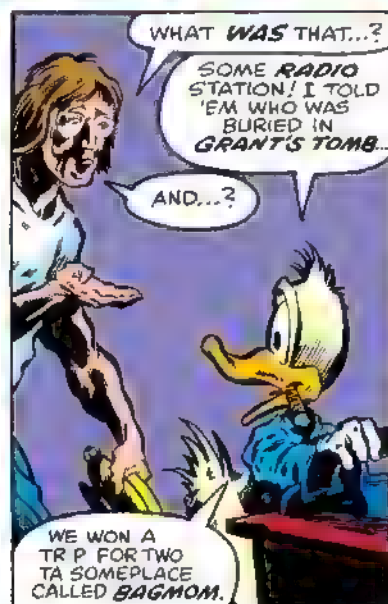
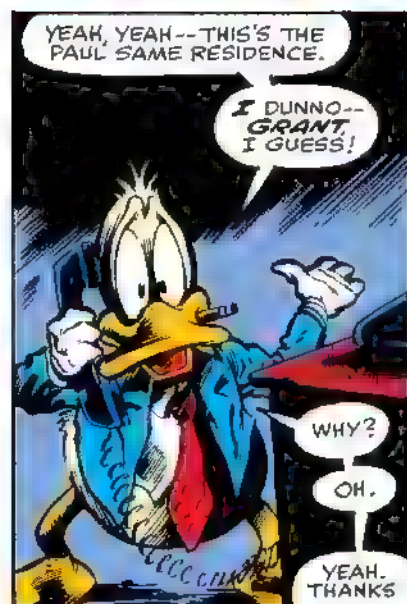
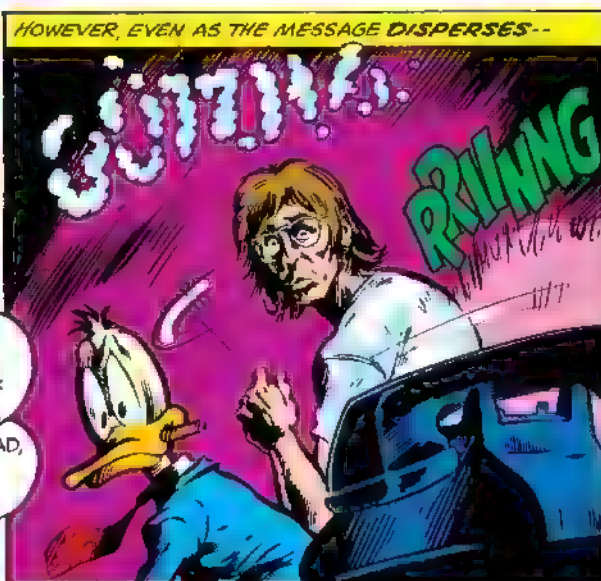
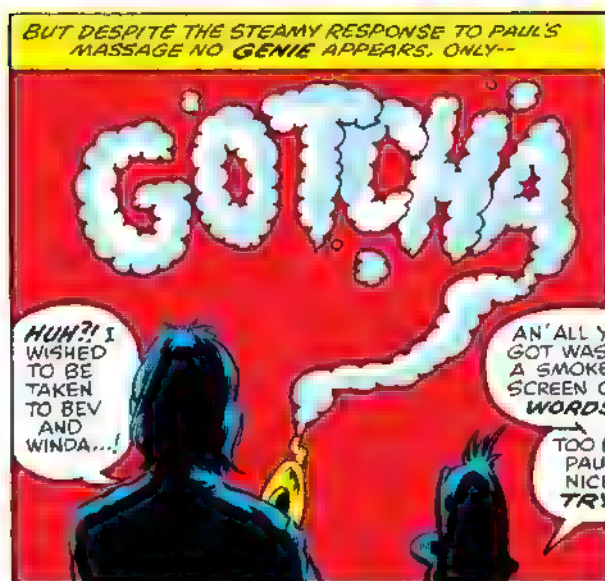
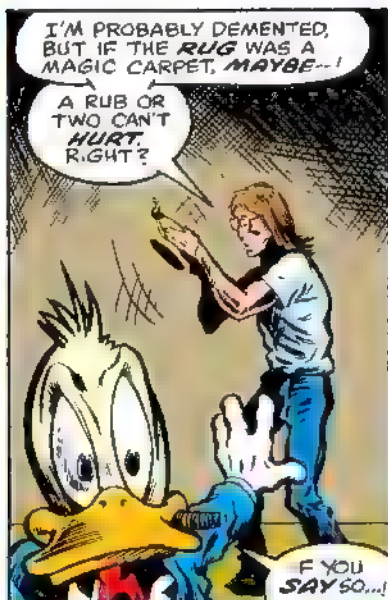
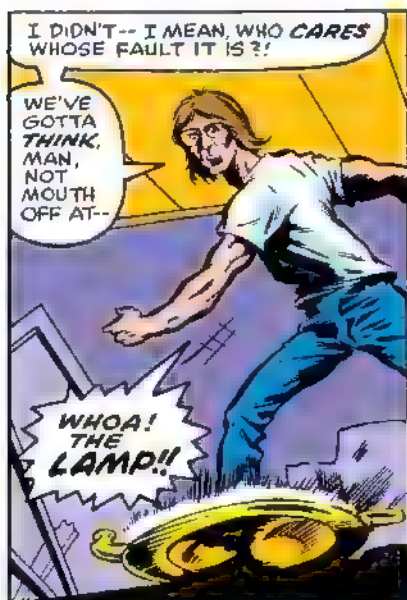
WE ARE COME
TO CLAIM
THE **CARPET--**
OR YOUR
HEADS!

UNBEARABLY
HACKNEYED..
BUT **TRUE!**
SURRENDER
WJ.D.'S **RUG--**
OR YOUR
LIVES ARE
FORFEIT!









CHAPTER
II

CALLING ALL CARPETS!

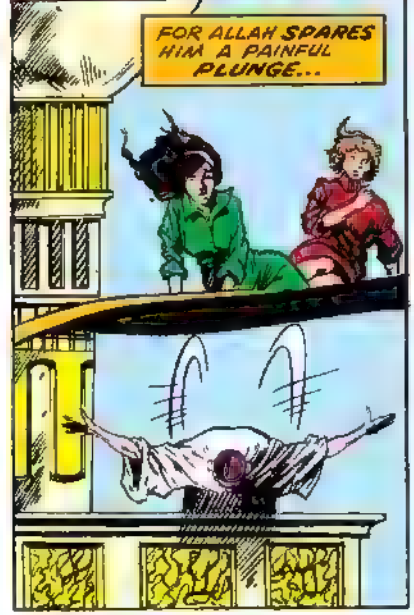
MORNING: ATOP A MINARETTED MOSQUE A PRIEST CALLS THE FAITHFUL TO PRAYER.



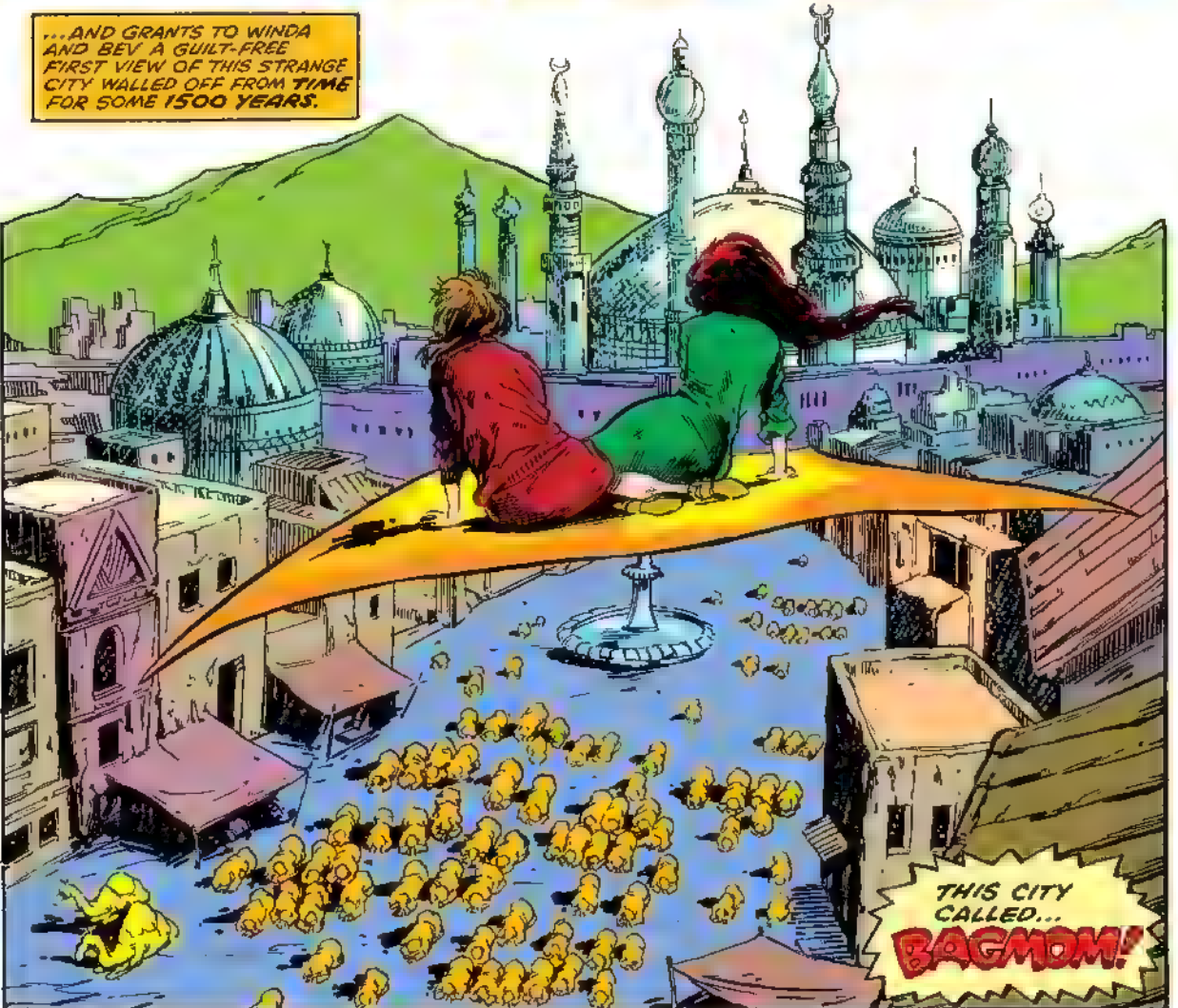
HIS FATE IN THE NEXT HALF-SECOND OR SO MAY BE TESTIMONY TO HIS OWN FAITH.



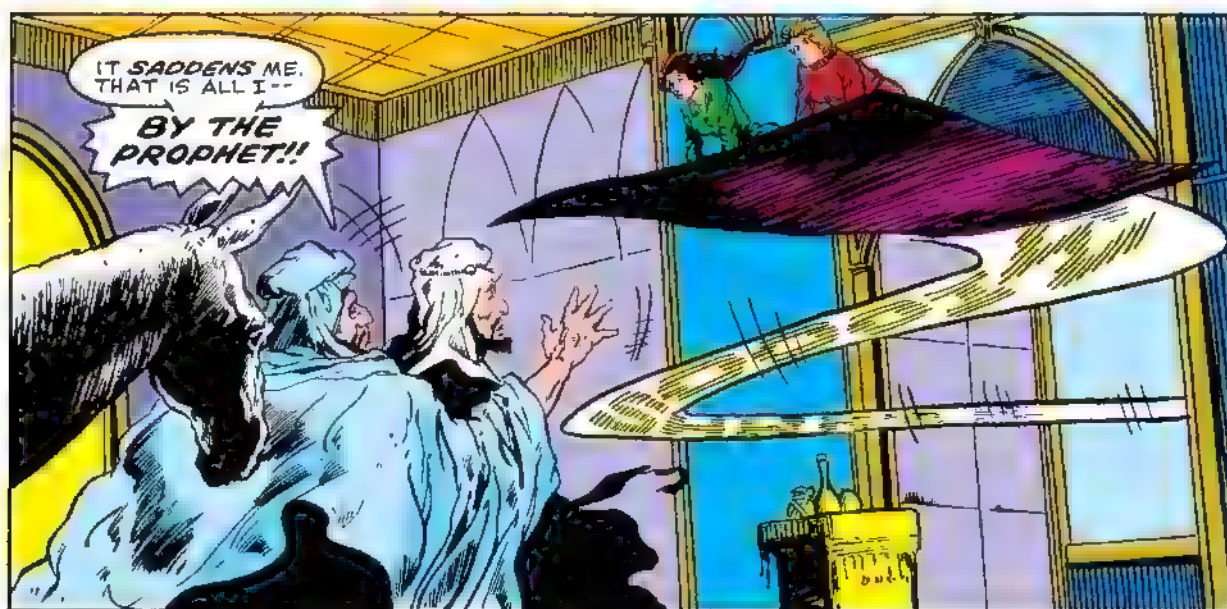
FOR ALLAH SPARES HIM A PAINFUL PLUNGE...

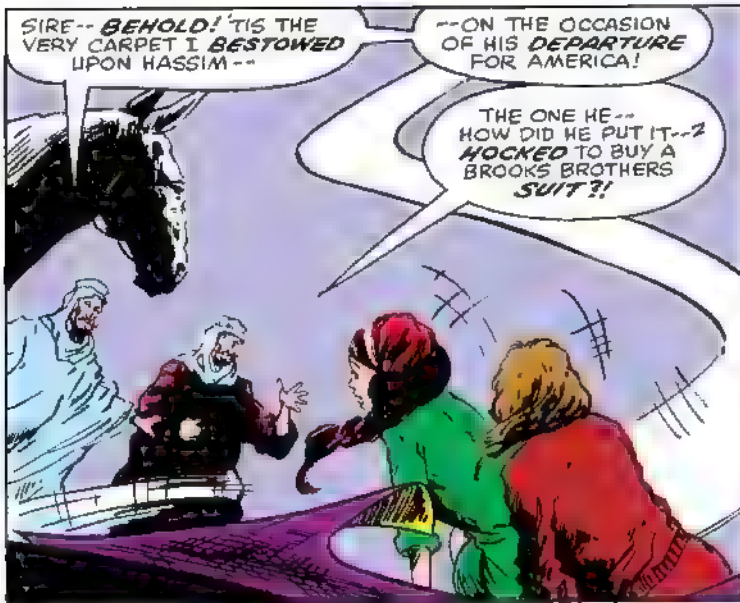


...AND GRANTS TO WINDA AND BEV A GUILT-FREE FIRST VIEW OF THIS STRANGE CITY WALLED OFF FROM TIME FOR SOME 1500 YEARS.



THIS CITY CALLED...
BAGNOM!





SIRE-- **BEHOLD!** 'TIS THE VERY CARPET I **BESTOWED** UPON HASSIM--

--ON THE OCCASION OF HIS **DEPARTURE** FOR AMERICA!

THE ONE HE-- HOW DID HE PUT IT--? **HOCKED** TO BUY A BROOKS BROTHERS **SUIT**?!



REMARKABLE! AND THESE **FEMALES**-- SURELY IT MUST BE **DIVINE PROVIDENCE**--!

WHAT'S HE **SAYING**?

I **DUNNO!** I'M **ONWY** **FWUENT** IN **ENGLISH**!



TWO SUCH **BEAUTEFUS** WESTERNERS DELIVERED TO **MY** PALACE--

-- JUST AS **MY SON** THREATENS TO **DEPART**!

AH, YES-- **PERFECT!** SO **FRAGILE**, AND YET...

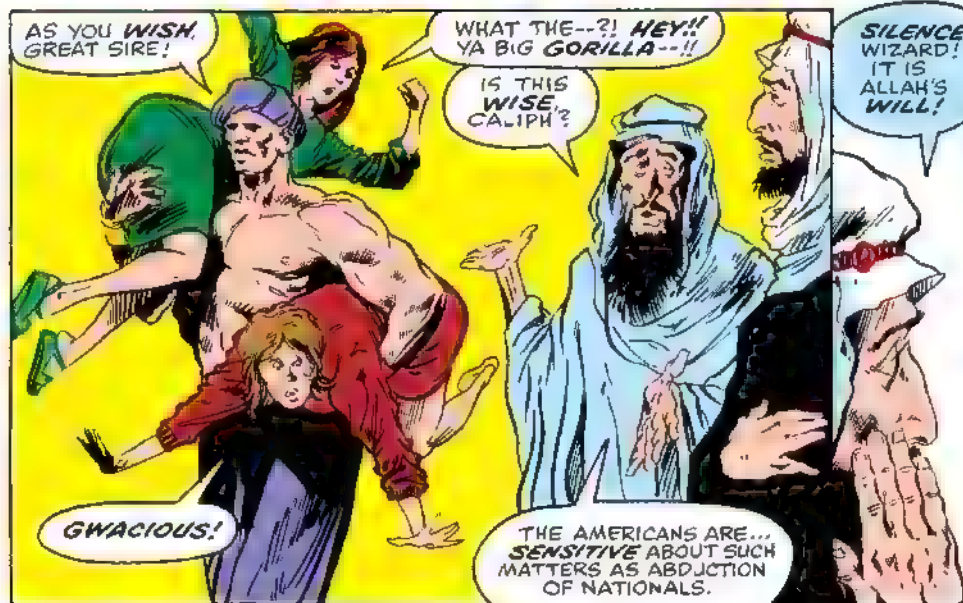


HANDS OFF BUSTER!!



...YET **POSSESSED** OF SUCH **SPUNK**!

RASHID-- TAKE THEM TO THE **HAREM**!



AS YOU **WISH**, GREAT SIRE!

WHAT THE--?! **HEY!!** YA BIG **GORILLA**--!!

IS THIS **WISE**, CALIPH?

SILENCE, WIZARD! IT IS **ALLAH'S WILL**!

MOREOVER, SHOULD THESE TWO **ASSUAGE** MY SON'S **APPETITE** FOR THINGS **WESTERN**-- IT'S **MY WILL**, ALSO!

GWACIOUS!

THE AMERICANS ARE... **SENSITIVE** ABOUT SUCH MATTERS AS **ABDUCTION** OF **NATIONALS**.



MIDNIGHT!

AN AIR CASBAH
TWIN ENGINE
LUXURY CRATE
WHEEZES THROUGH
THE SKIES OVER
BAGMOM...

... DISCHARGING
TWO TERRIFIED
PASSENGERS!

THEY
MIGHT'VE AT
LEAST *WARNED*
US THAT NO
PLANES ARE
ALLOWED TO
LAND IN
BAGMOM!

SO BIG
DEAL-- THEY
DON'T
ENCOURAGE
TOURISM!

JUST CLAM
UP AN'
PLUMMET,
PALL!!

WHICH IS
PRECISELY
WHAT THEY
DO-- THEIR
CHUTES
AFFORDING
SOME
BRAKE--

-- BUT TOO
LITTLE AT
SO LOW AN
ALTITUDE--

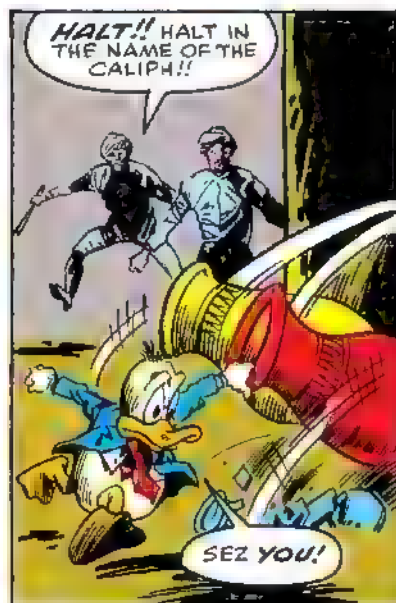
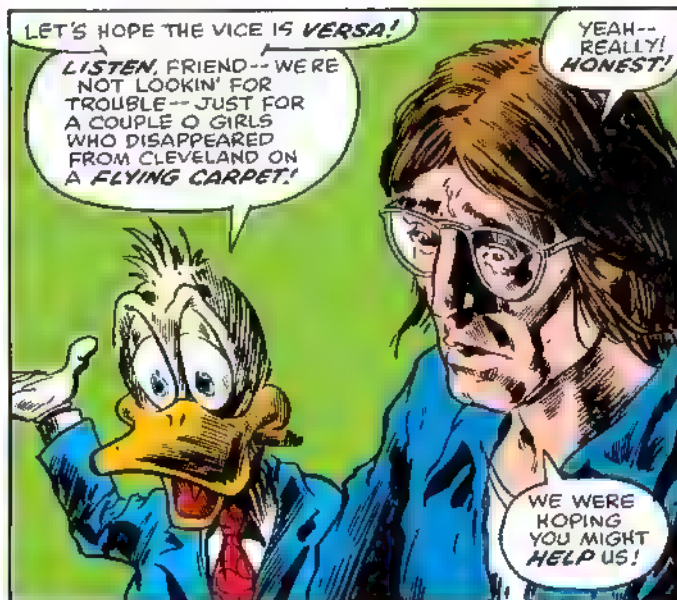
-- TO MAKE
THEIR IMPACT
IN A BAGMOM
BACK ALLEY
ANYTHING
RESEMBLING
GENTLE.

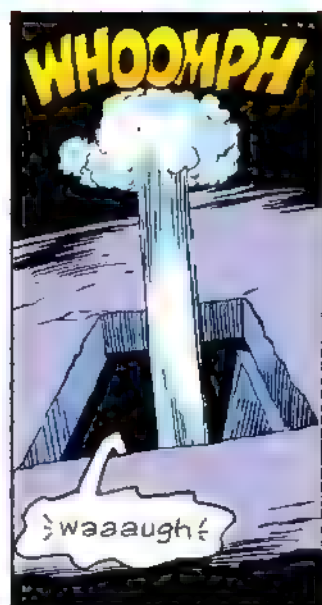
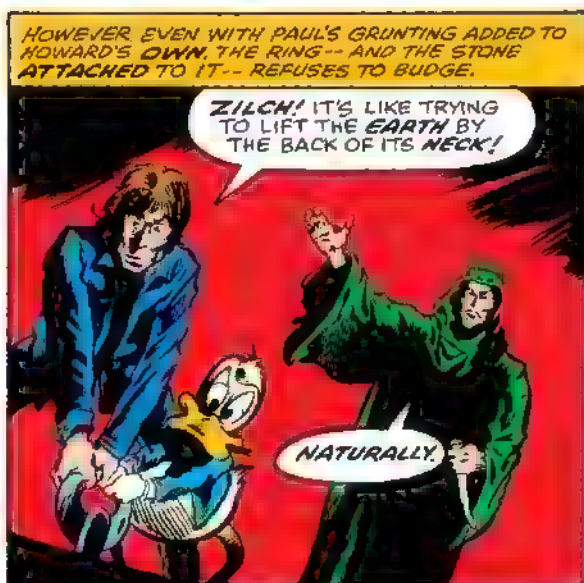
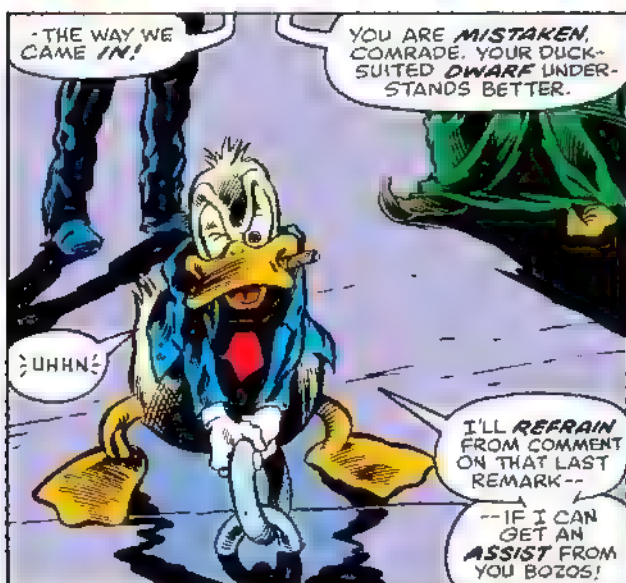
H-HEY--
WE MADE
IT! WE'RE
ALIVE!!

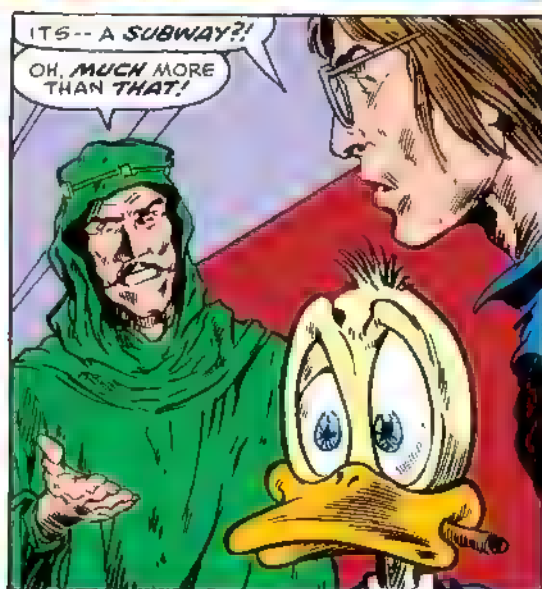
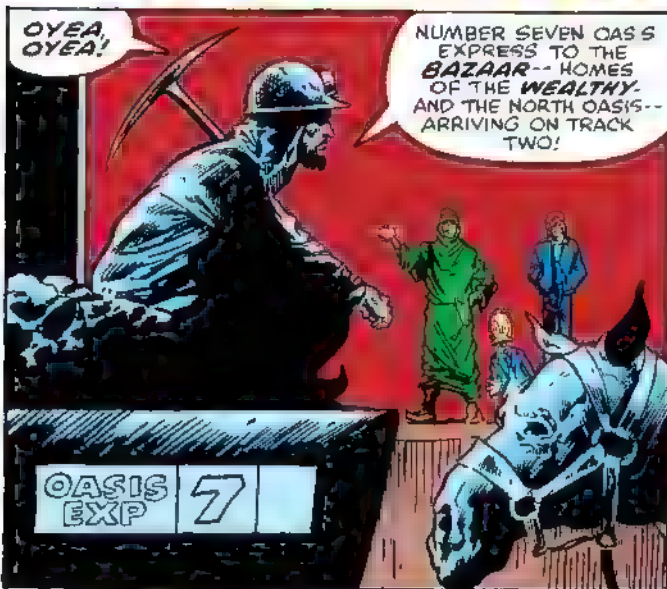
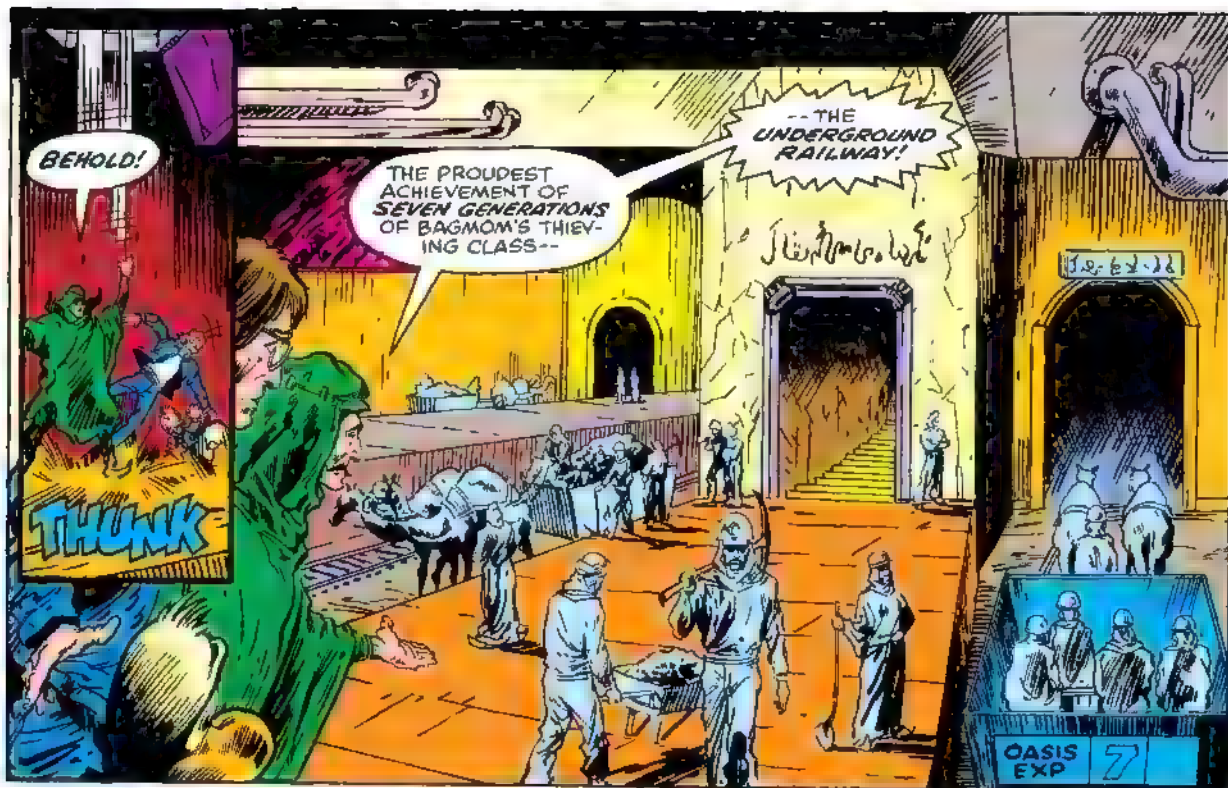
Waaugh!

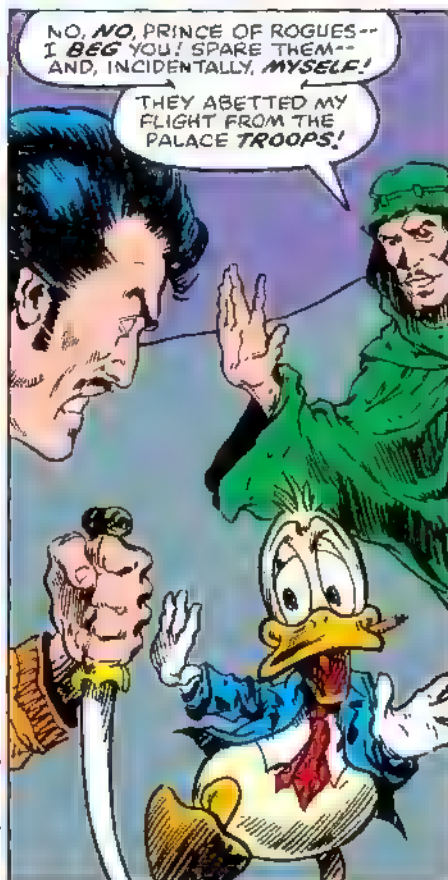
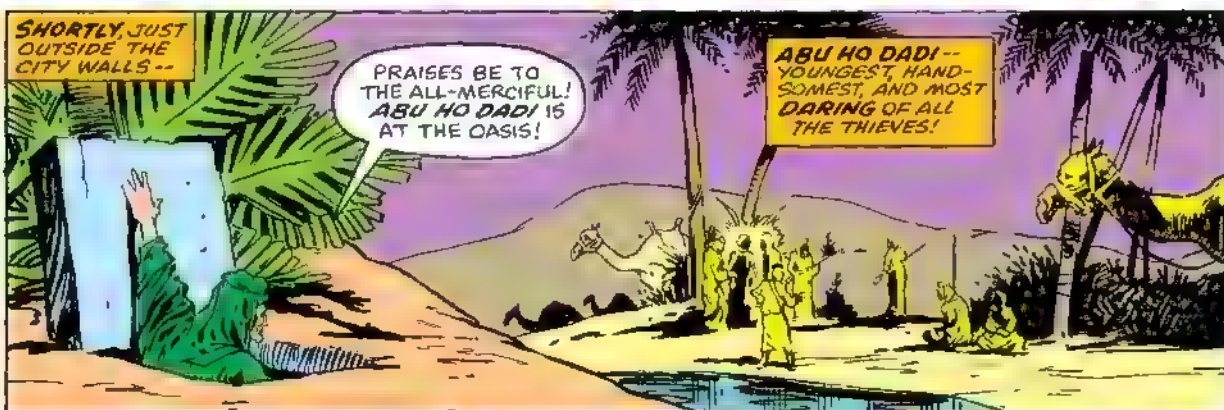
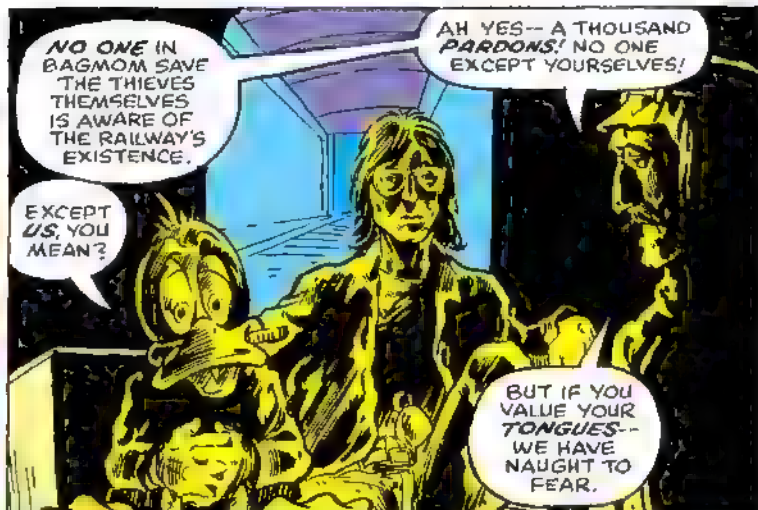
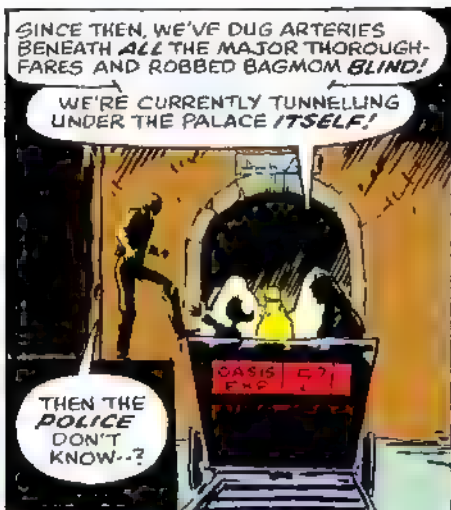
THUK

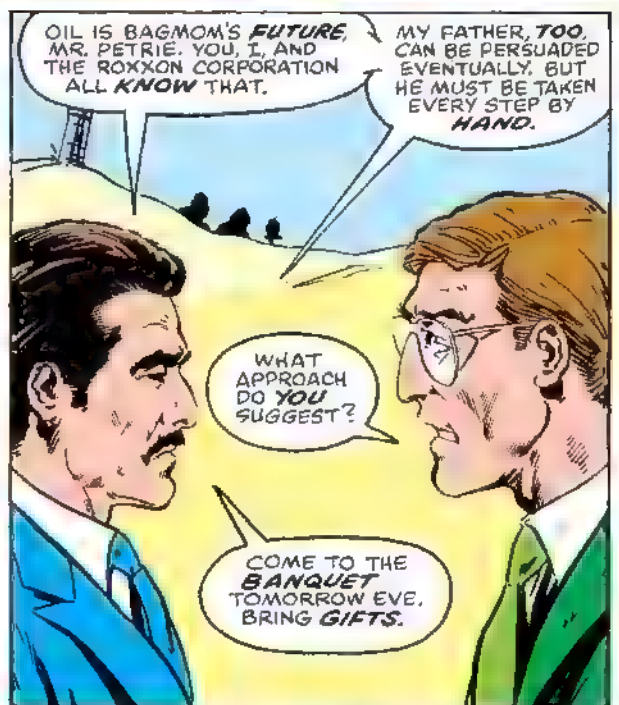


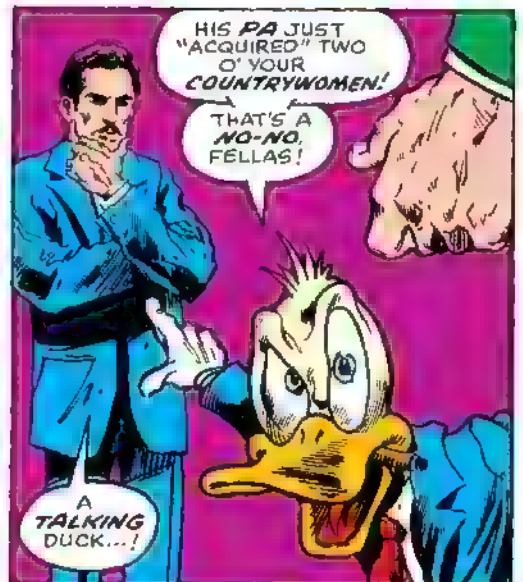
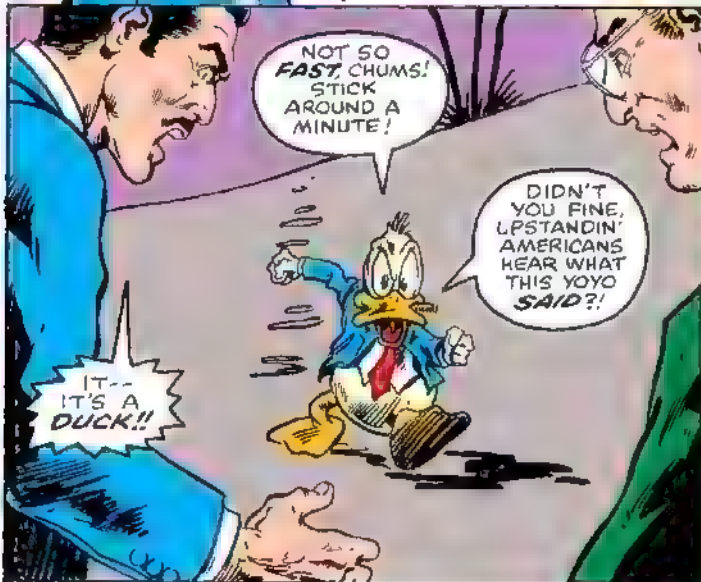
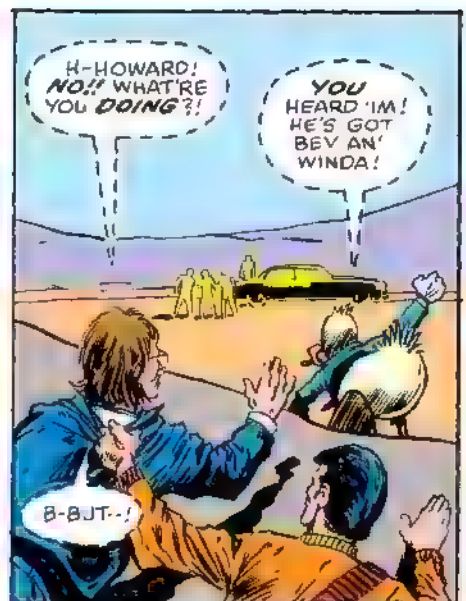
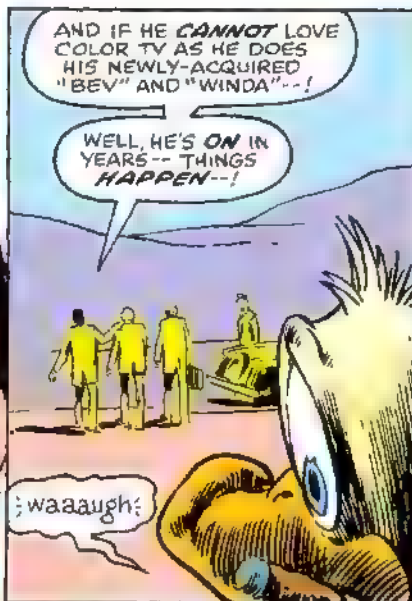
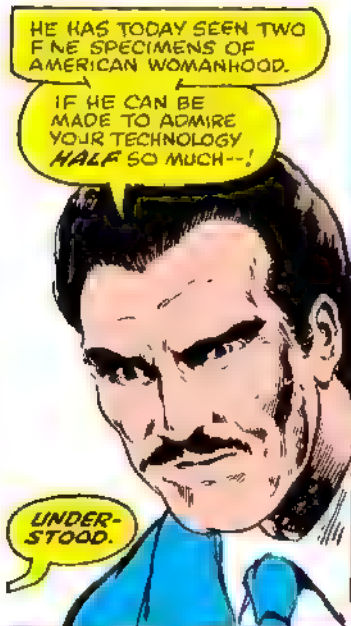






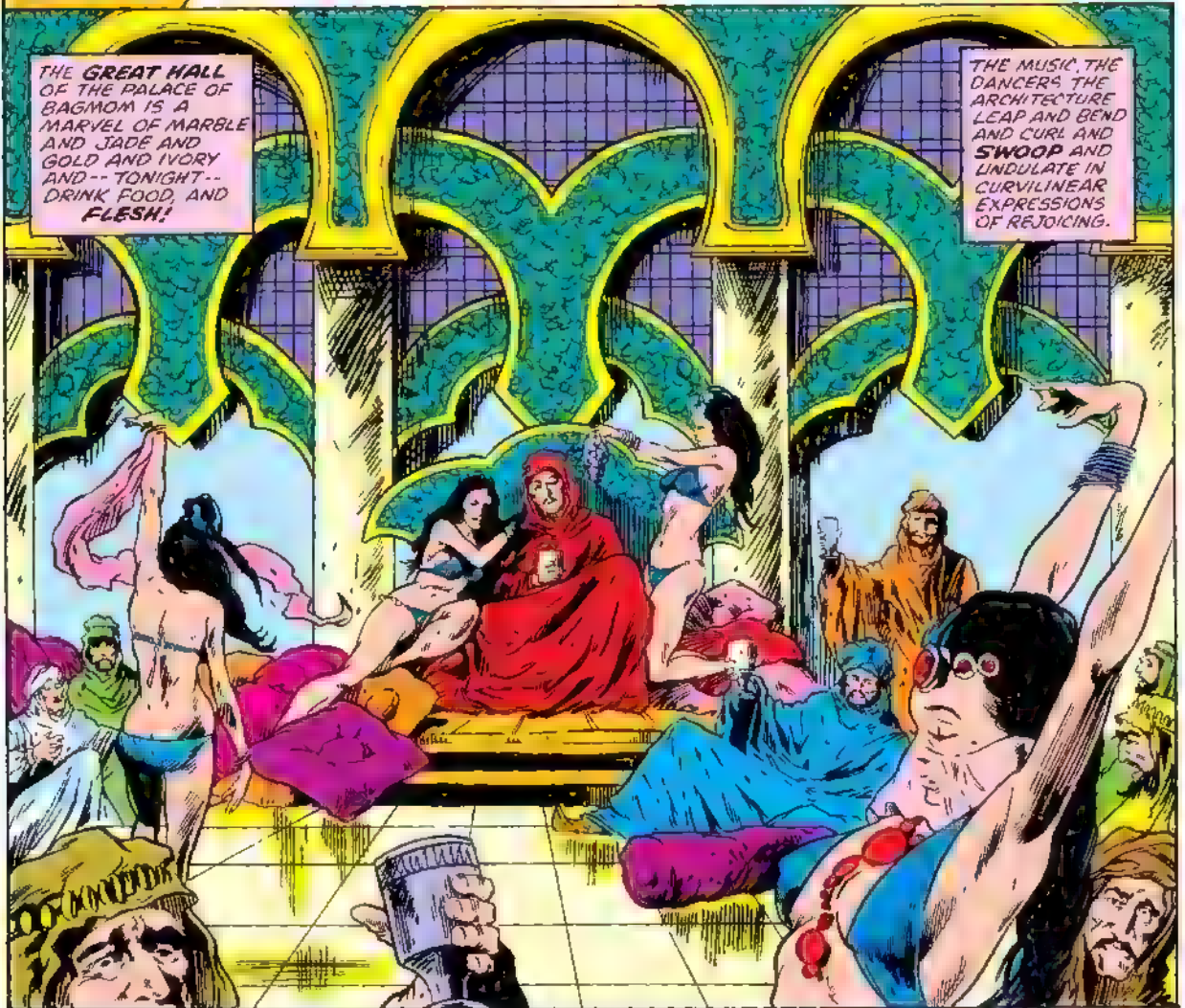






CHAPTER III

THE DESERT SONG--AND DANCE!



THE GREAT HALL OF THE PALACE OF BAGMOM IS A MARVEL OF MARBLE AND JADE AND GOLD AND IVORY AND-- TONIGHT-- DRINK FOOD, AND FLESH!

THE MUSIC, THE DANCERS, THE ARCHITECTURE LEAP AND BEND AND CURL AND SWOOP AND UNDULATE IN CURVILINEAR EXPRESSIONS OF REJOICING.



ARE YOU **HAPPY**, MY LOVELIES? HAS YOUR LORD AND MASTER THE **CALIPH**, WARMED YOUR HEARTS AND FILLED YOUR TAUT BELL ES WITH THIS FEAST OF FEASTS?

OH, YES GOOD AND MIGHTY ONE! YES! YES!

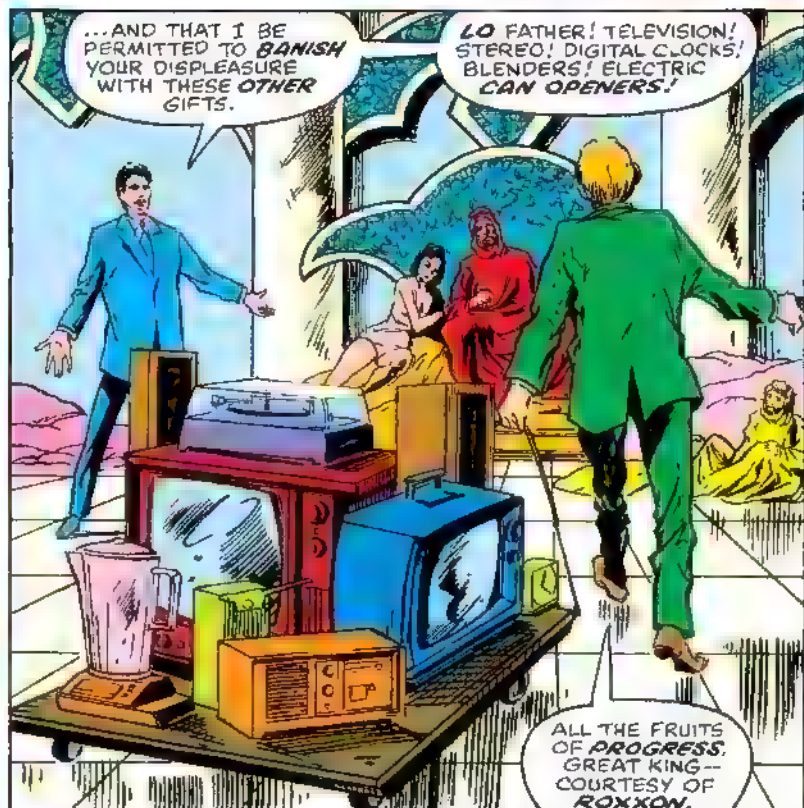
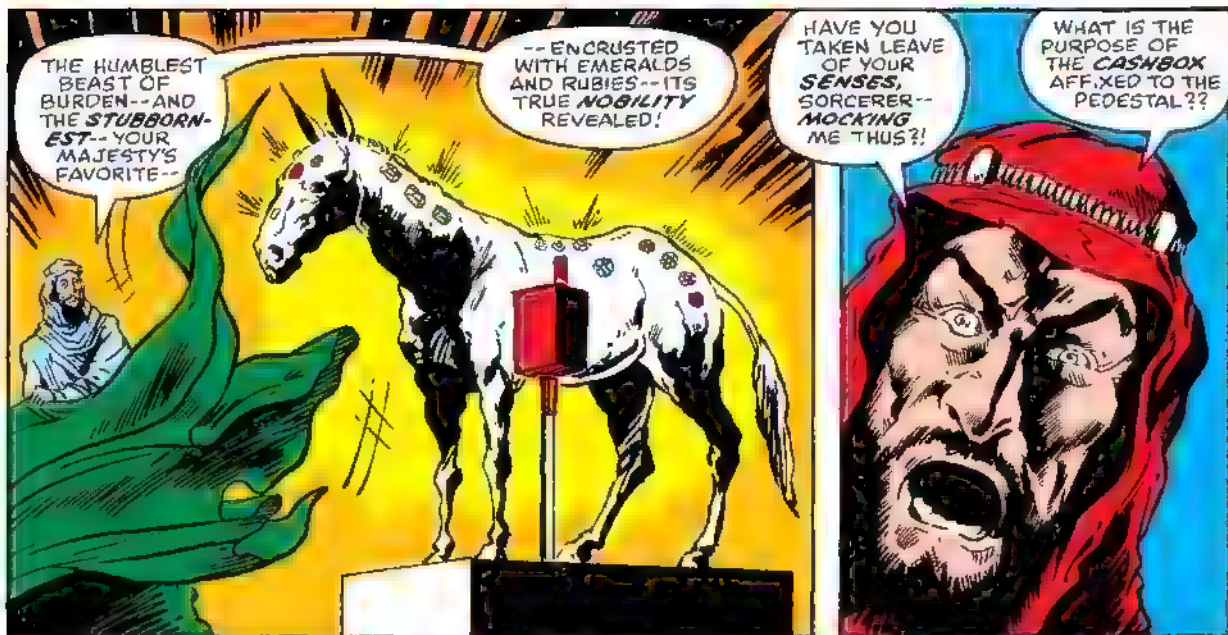
SIGH! HOW YOU GUSH MY SWEET.

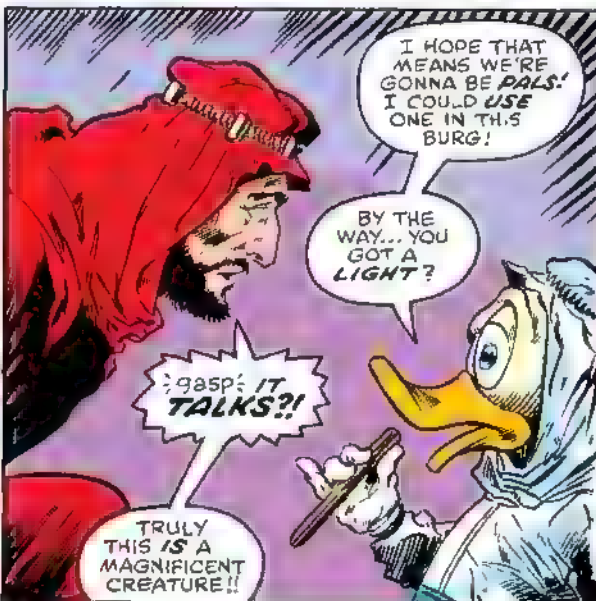
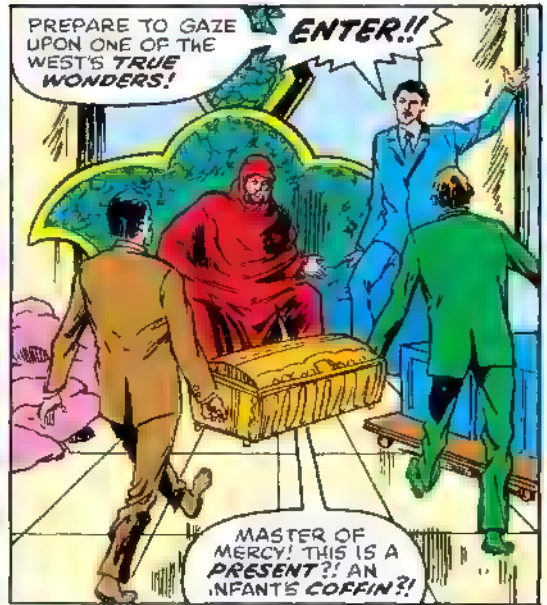
STILL... YOU ARE CORRECT.



NOW LET US SEE IF MY **MAGICIAN** CAN LIKEWISE GRATIFY ME! **WISID**?

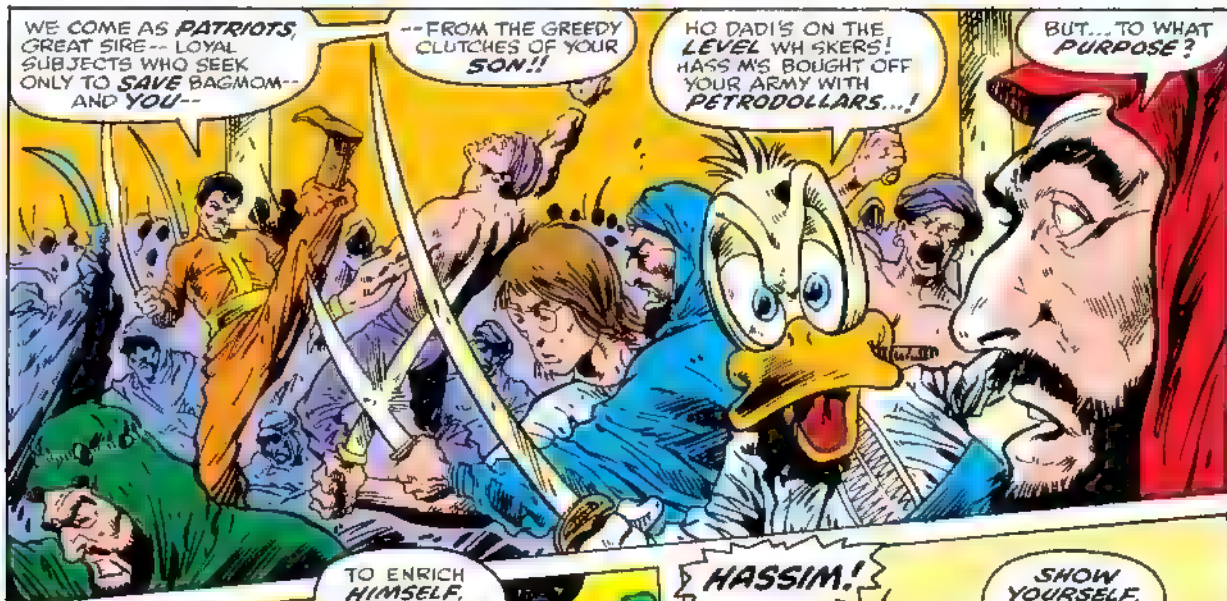
NOT LIKEWISE MAJESTY, BUT EQUALLY I PRAY! BEHOLD!

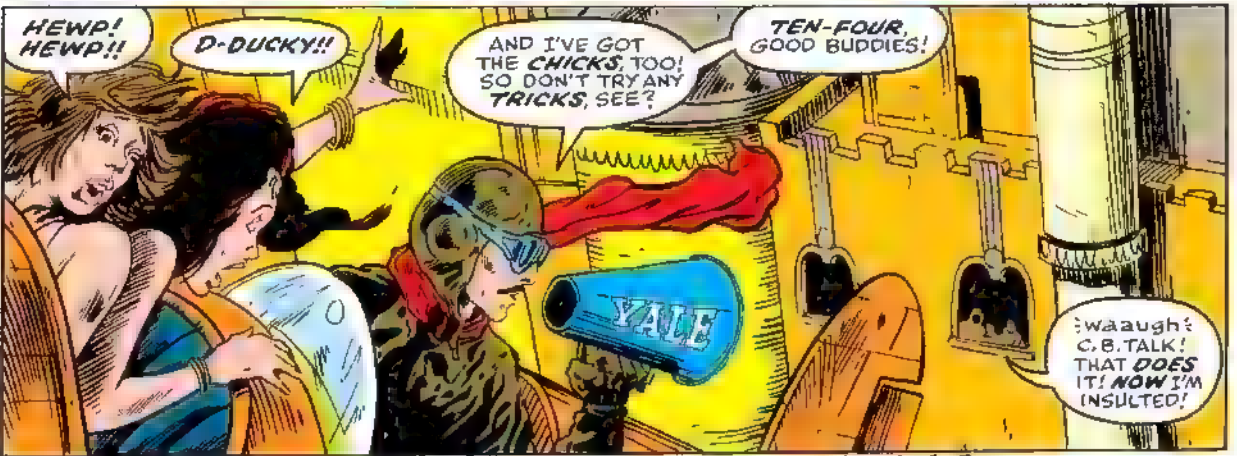
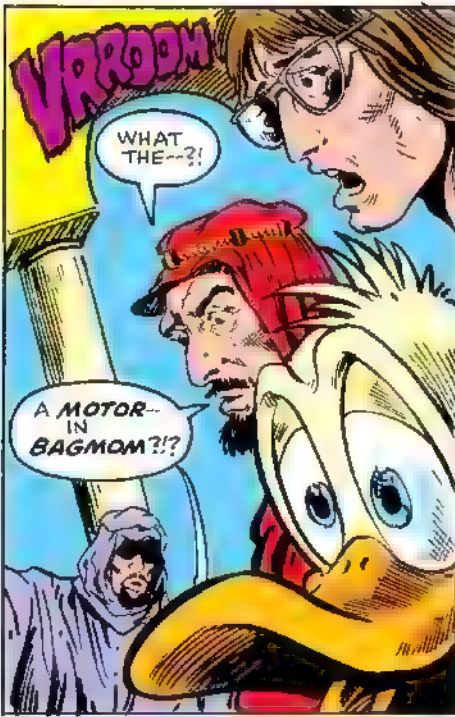


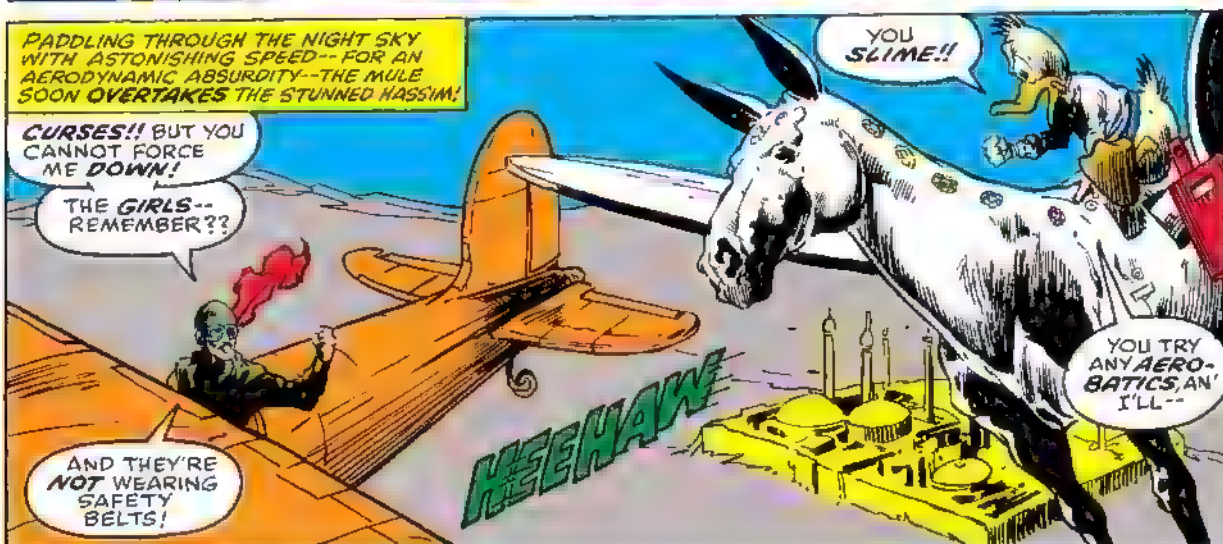
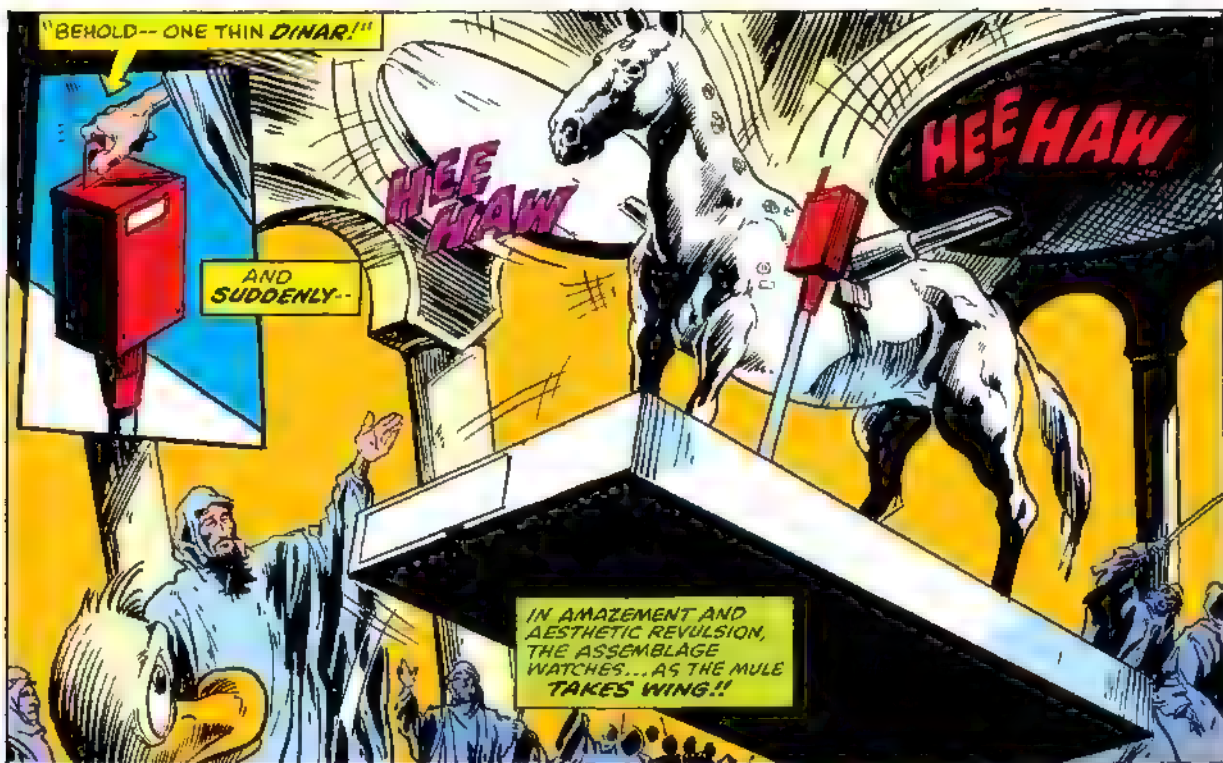


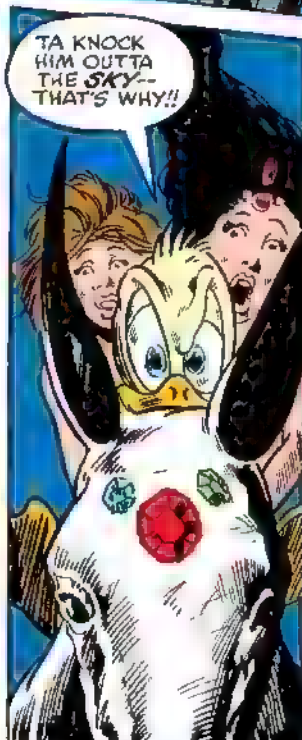
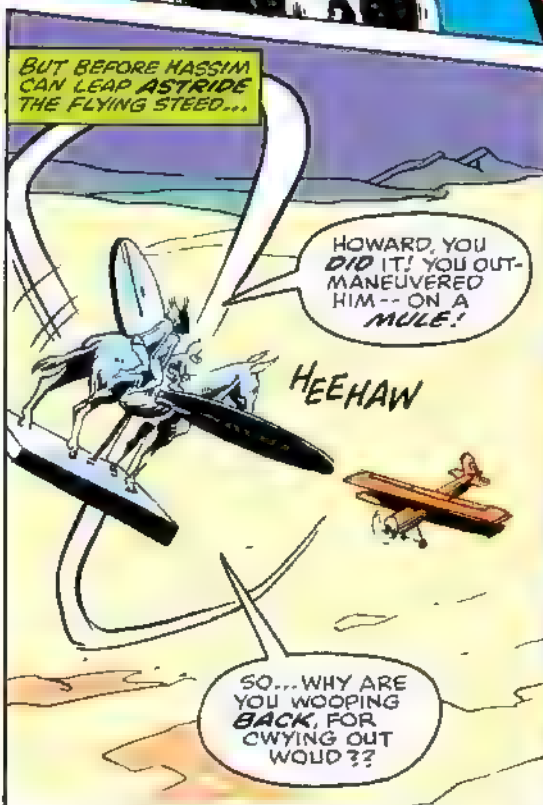
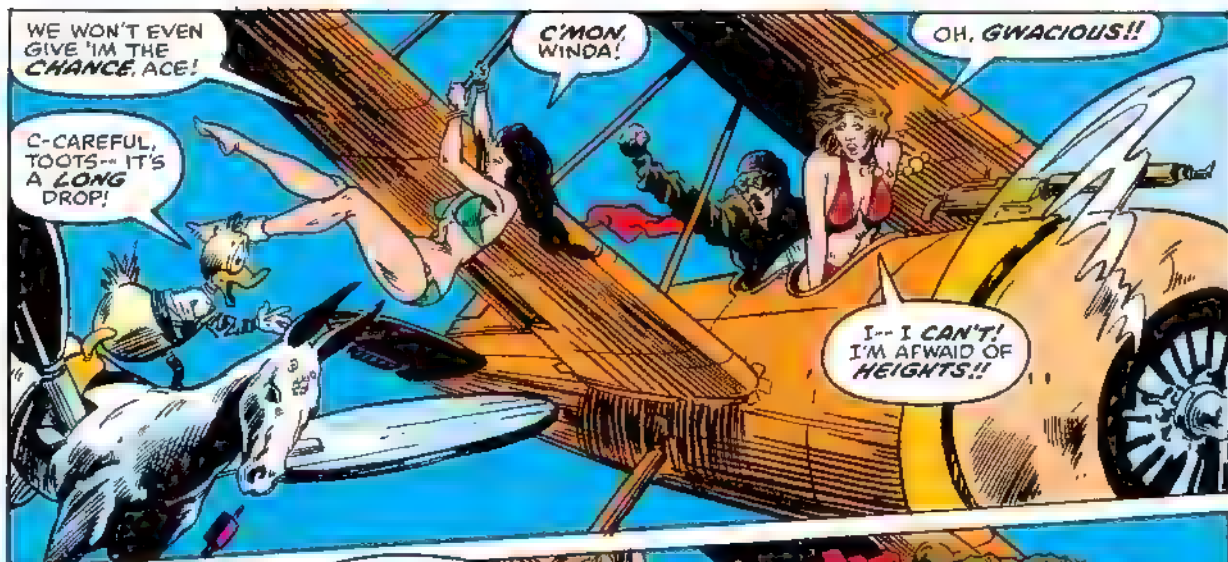


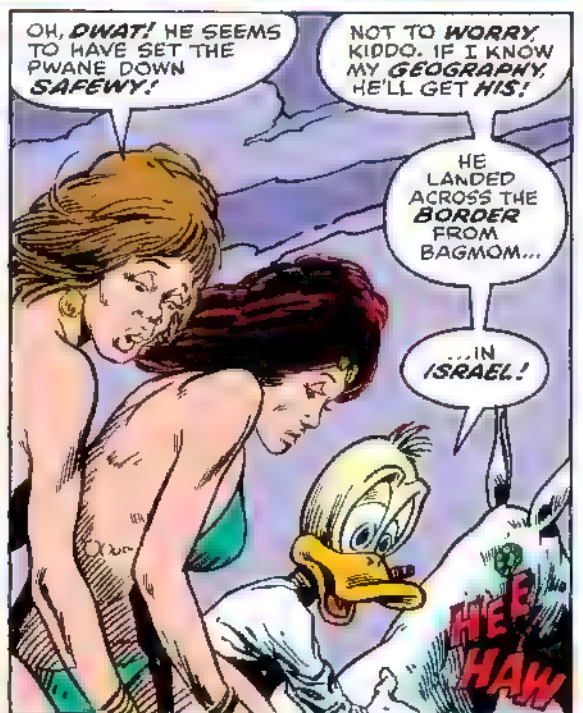
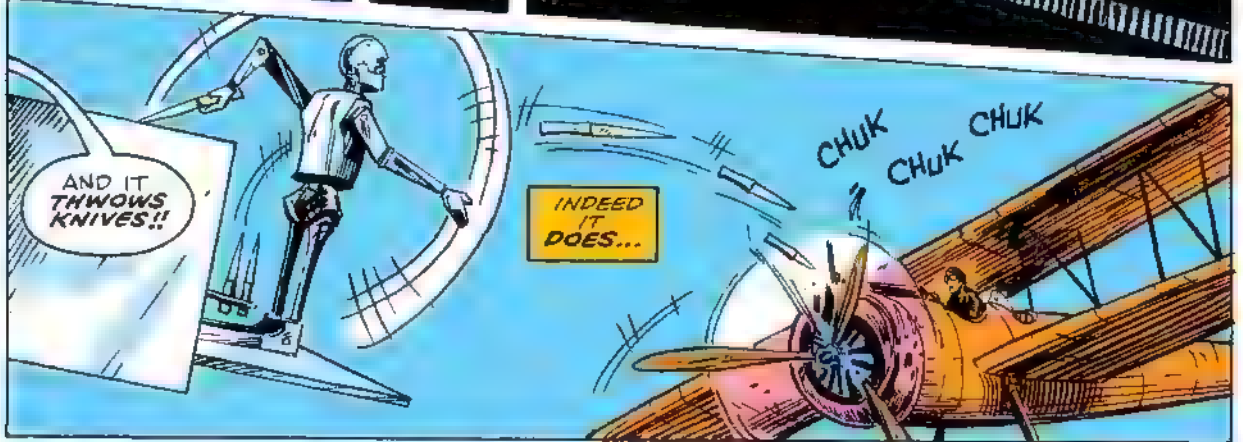
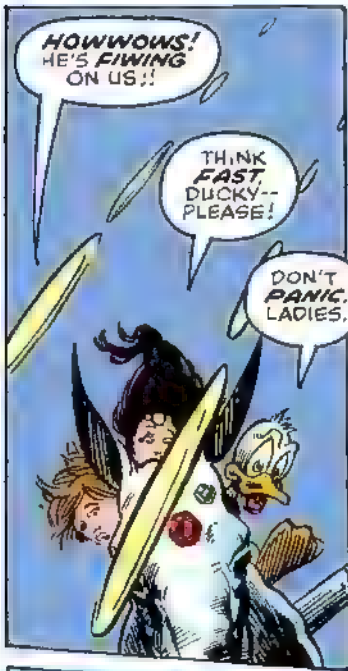




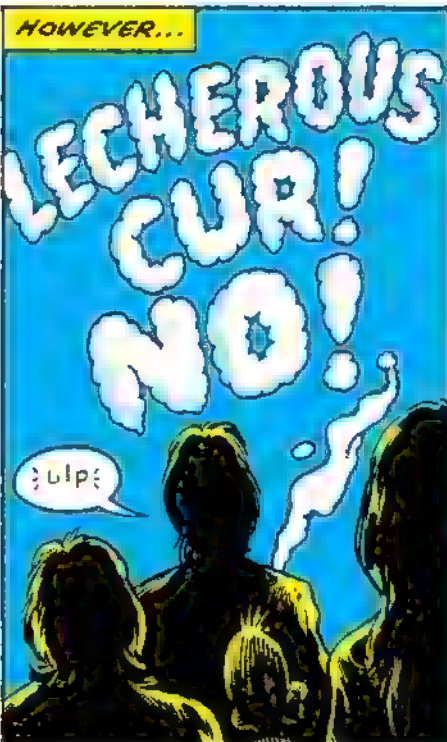
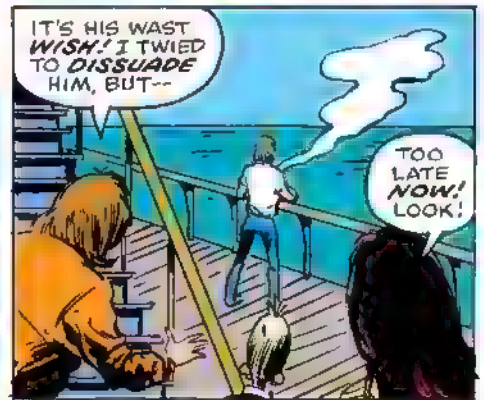
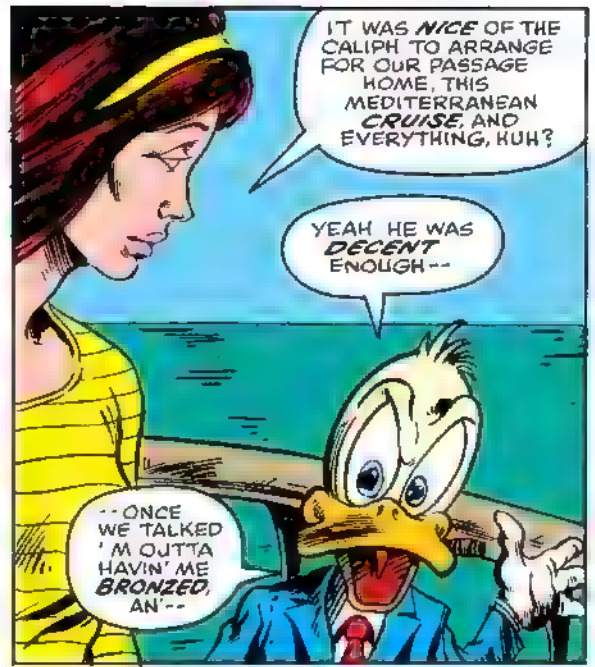
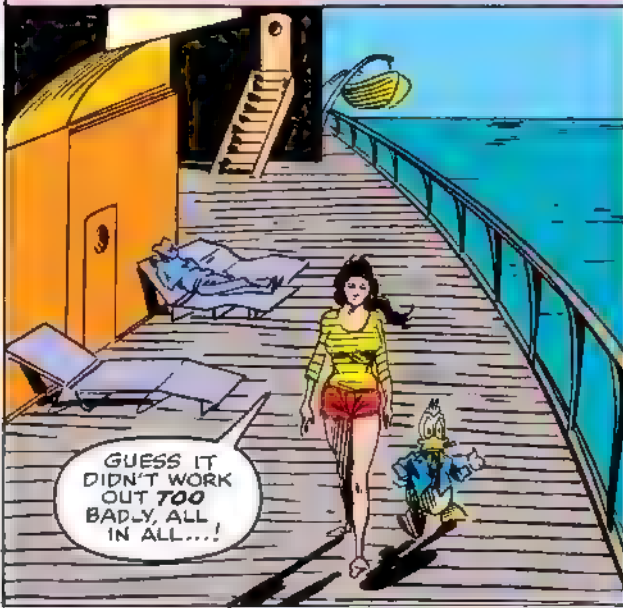








EPILOG: AFTER THE EXPLANATIONS, THE
FEASTING, THE FAREWELLS...



HOWARD
THE DUCK

MARVEL® COMICS GROUP



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TRAPPED IN A WORLD HE NEVER MADE!

HOWARD THE DUCK

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WELCOME TO THE
MEDITERRANEAN'S
LAST RESORT!

THE MYSTERIOUS
ISLAND OF
DR. BONG!



From the time of his hatching, he was ..different. A potentially brilliant scholar who dreaded the structured environment of school, he educated himself in the streets, taking whatever work was available, formulating his philosophy of self from what he learned of the world about him. And then the Cosmic Axis shifted...and that world *changed*. Suddenly, he was stranded in a universe he could not fathom. Without warning, he became a strange fowl in an even stranger land

Stan Lee PRESENTS: HOWARD THE DUCK!™

STEVE GERBER
WRITER/EDITOR

GENE COLAN
ARTIST

KLAUS JANSON
INKER/COLORIST

IRV WATANABE
LETTERER

THE ISLAND OF DR. BONG!

FOLLOWING THEIR
ADVENTURE IN
EXOTIC BAGMOM*,
HOWARD, BEV, PAUL,
AND WINDA SAIL
HOMEWARD...

PSST
PSST

PSST

PSST

...ALL EXPENSES
PAID BY THE
GRATEFUL CALIF
WHOSE CITY THEY
SAVED.

OH, LET
THEM WHISPER!
WHO CARES?

BACK IN HIGH
SCHOOL, THE BOYS
USE TO CALL ME
"THUNDER-THIGHS"...

...AT THE TOP
OF THEIR
ADOLESCENT
LUNGS!

*SEE MTD
ANNUAL #1,
NOW ON
SALE. -S.G.

PSST

PSST

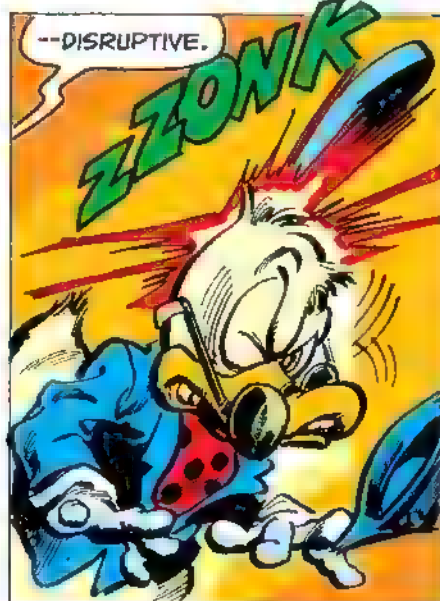
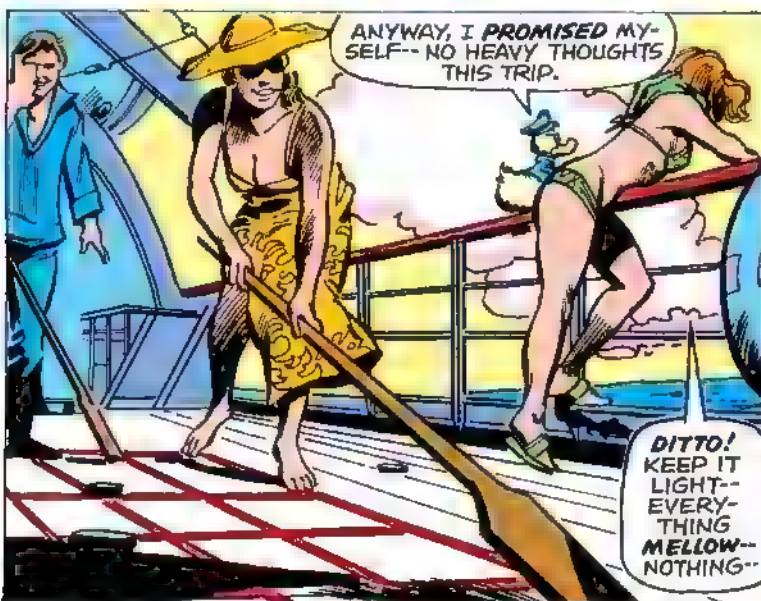
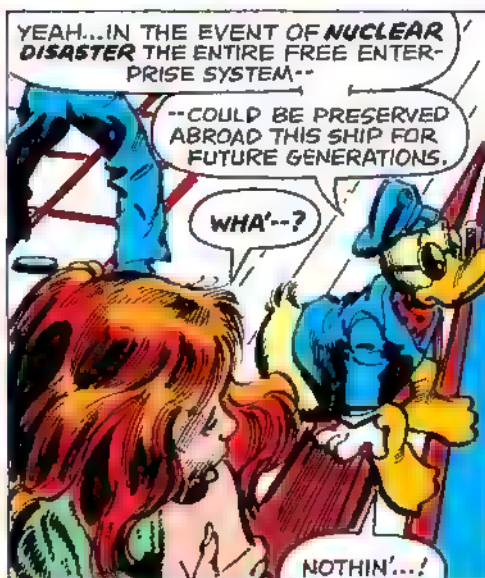
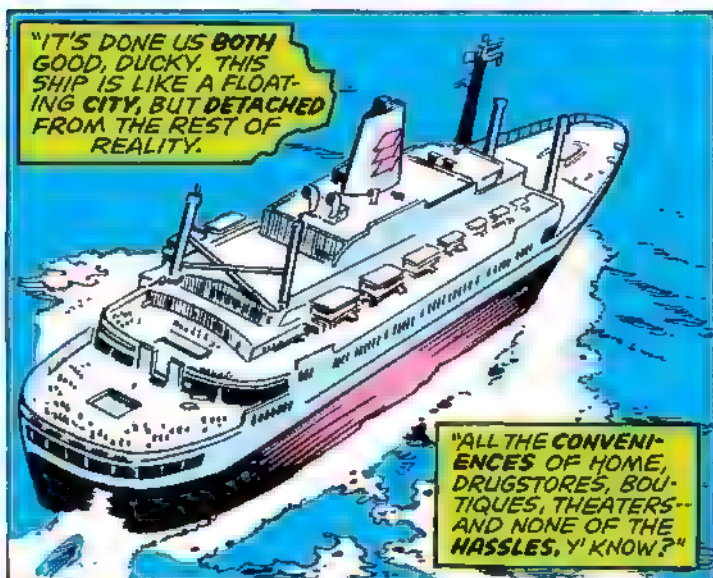
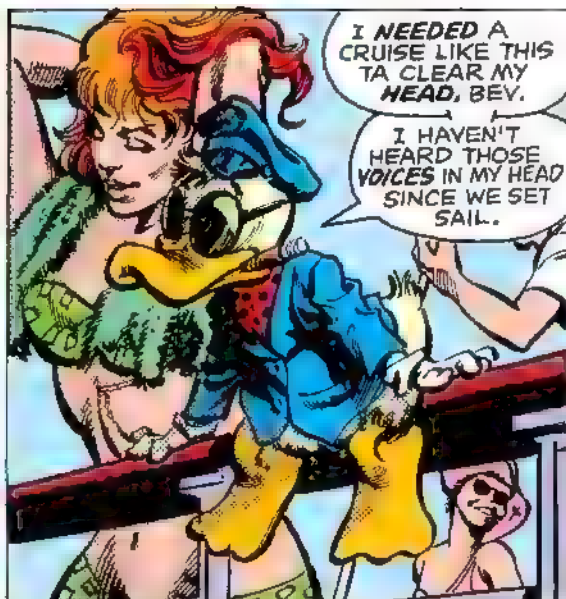
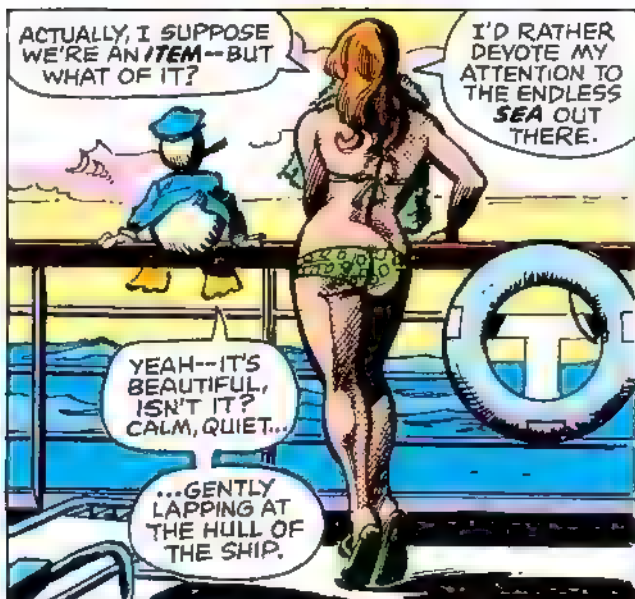
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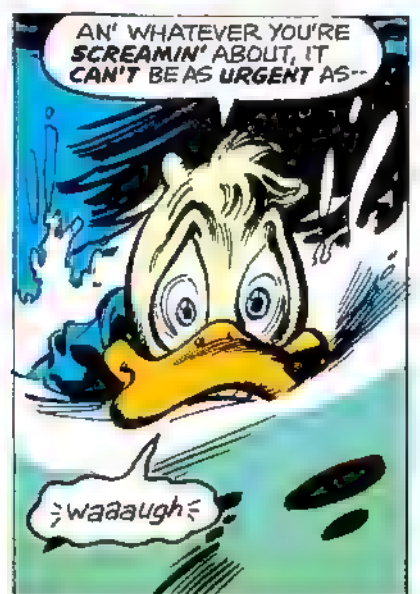
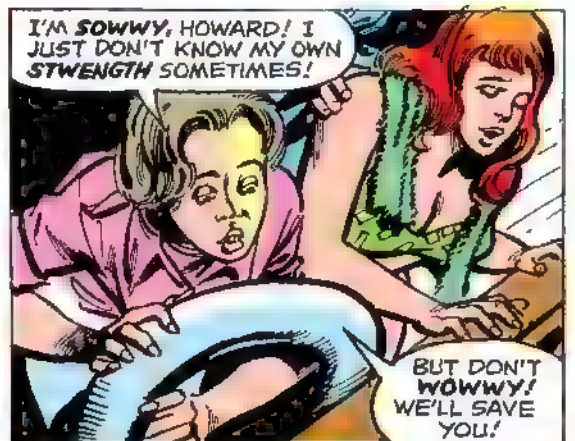
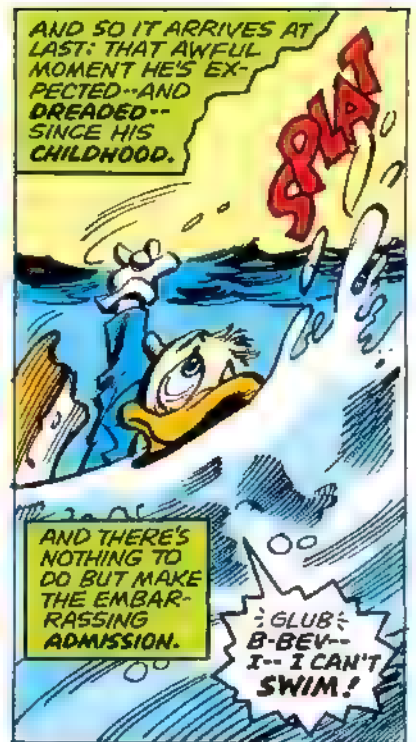
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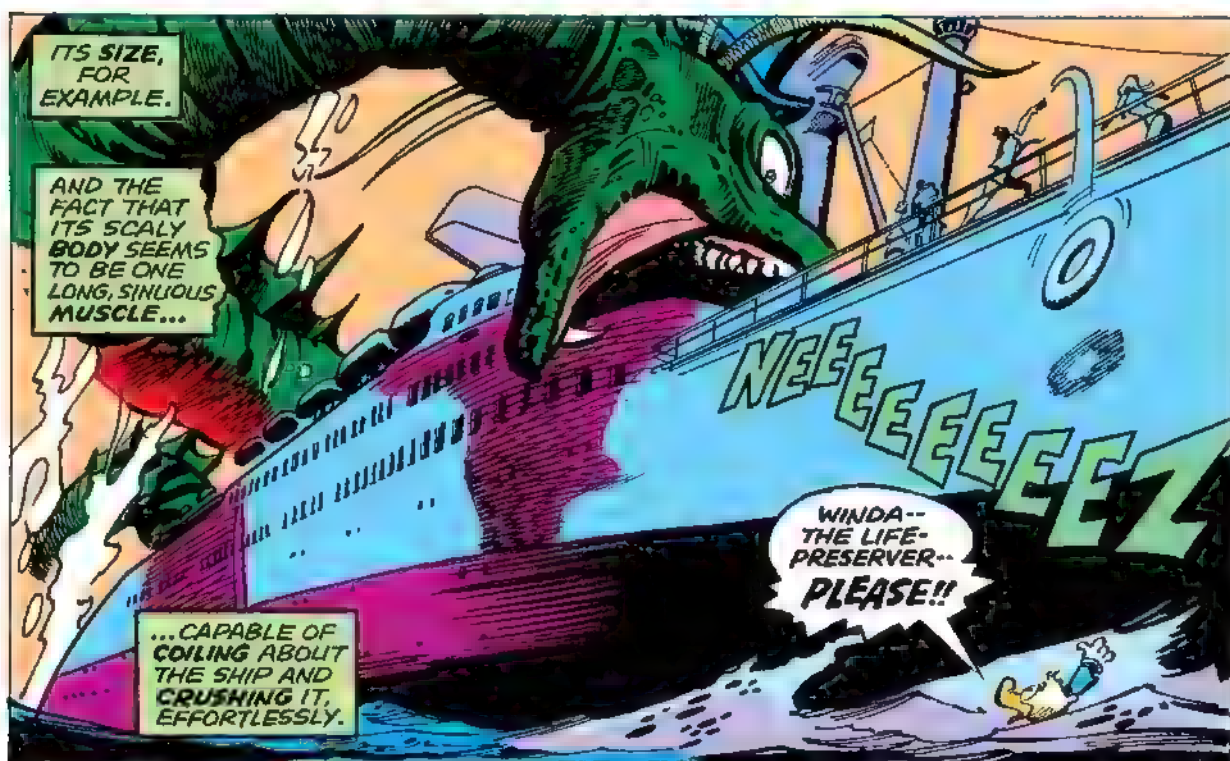
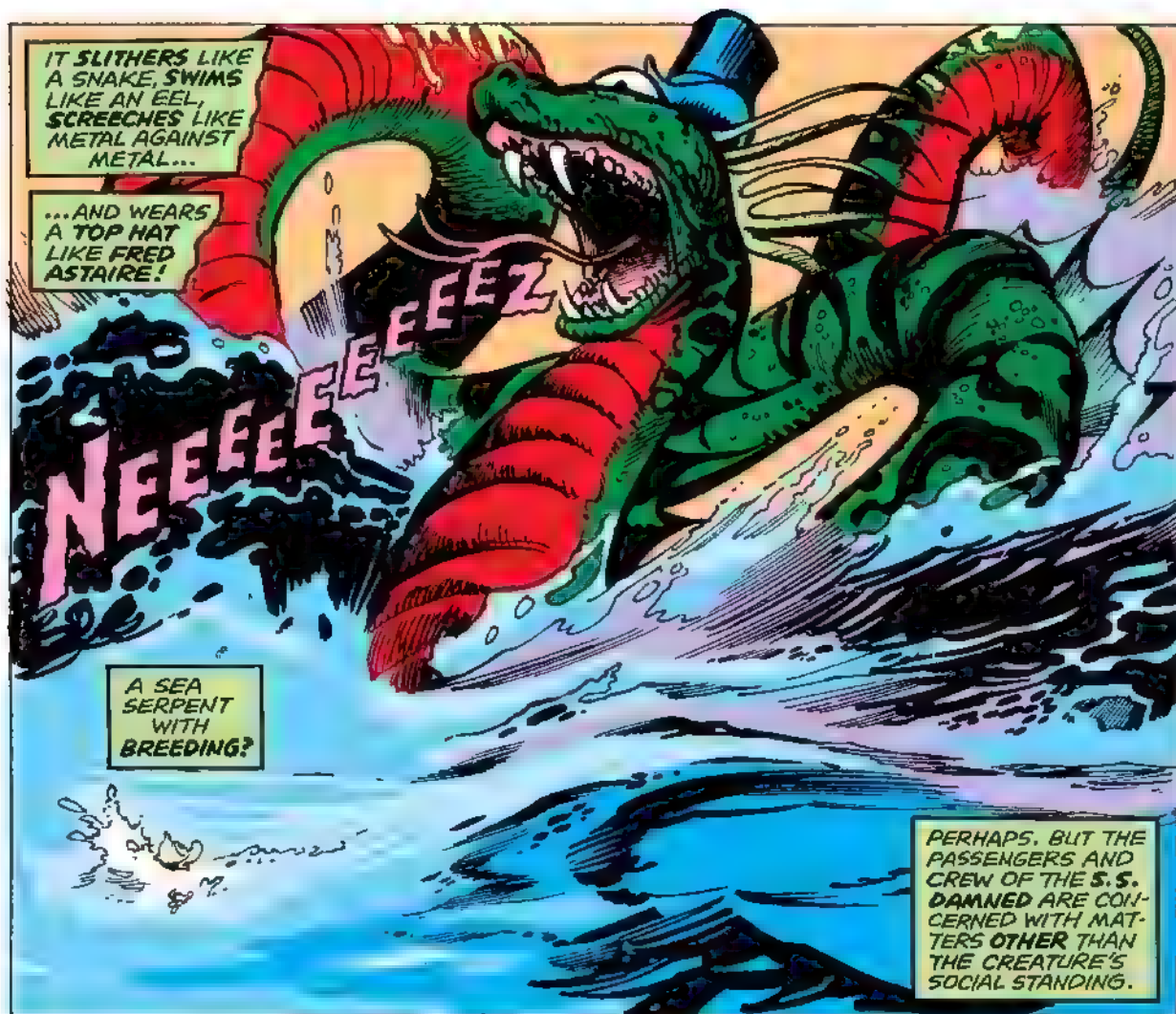
WHE W

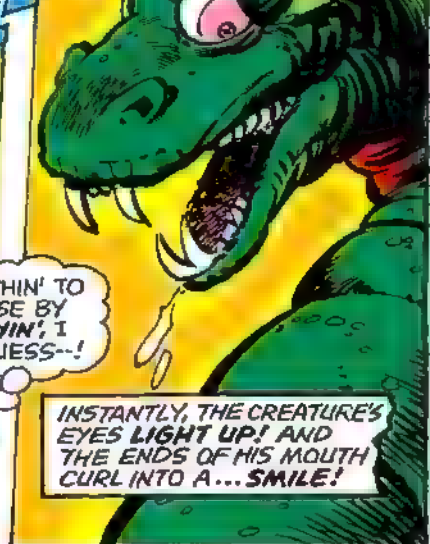
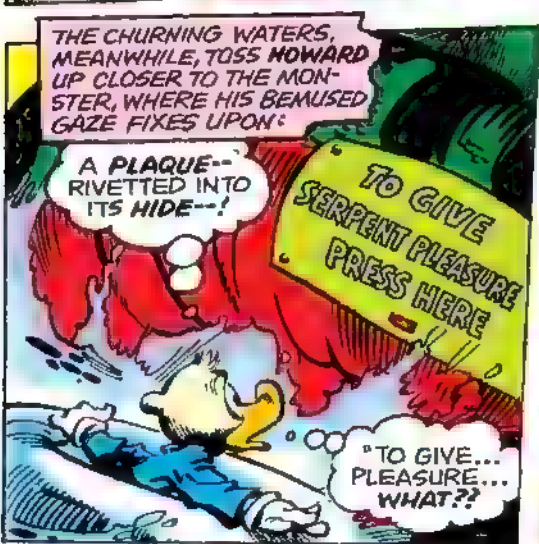
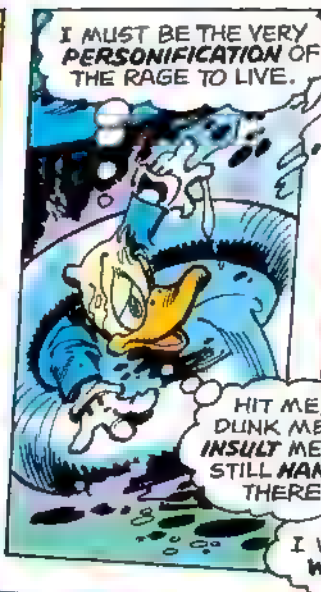
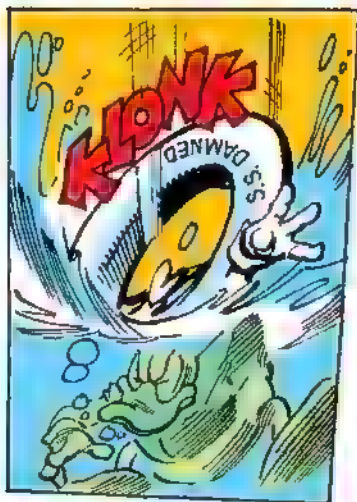
YEAH, OKAY...
YOU'RE RIGHT.
IT'D BE STUPID TO
LET A FEW ENVIOUS
MUTTERERS MAR
OUR GOOD TIME!

ONLY I THINK
THEY WERE
HISSIN' ABOUT
ME!









AND, AS IF THE SHIP HAD NEVER EXISTED, THE MONSTER ABANDONS ITS ATTACK AND PLOWS OFF THROUGH THE WATER, THE ENTIRE LENGTH OF ITS BODY QUIVERING WITH DELIGHT.

NEEZ!
NEEZ!
NEEZ!

SO...IT MUST
BE LIFE'S LITTLE
SURPRISES THAT
KEEP ME
GOING...

GEE! IF I'D
DROWNED, I'D
NEVER HAVE
LEARNED THAT
SEA SERPENTS
COME EQUIPPED
WITH PLEASURE-
CENTER
STIMULATORS!

HOWARD!!
CATCH!!

HUH--?

OH!!

NUTS! ALMOST
FORGOT WHERE
I WAS!

ATTAWAY, MATE--
JUST STAY LOOSE!
WE'LL HAUL YA
RIGHT UP!

YOU'RE
A HERO,
FELLA!

OTHERWISE,
YOU'D'A LET
ME SINK, HUH,
CAP'N?

NOW, NOW...NO NEED
FOR *SARCASM*, SON.
WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE
BACK WITH US,
SAFE 'N' SOUND!

UH-HUH.

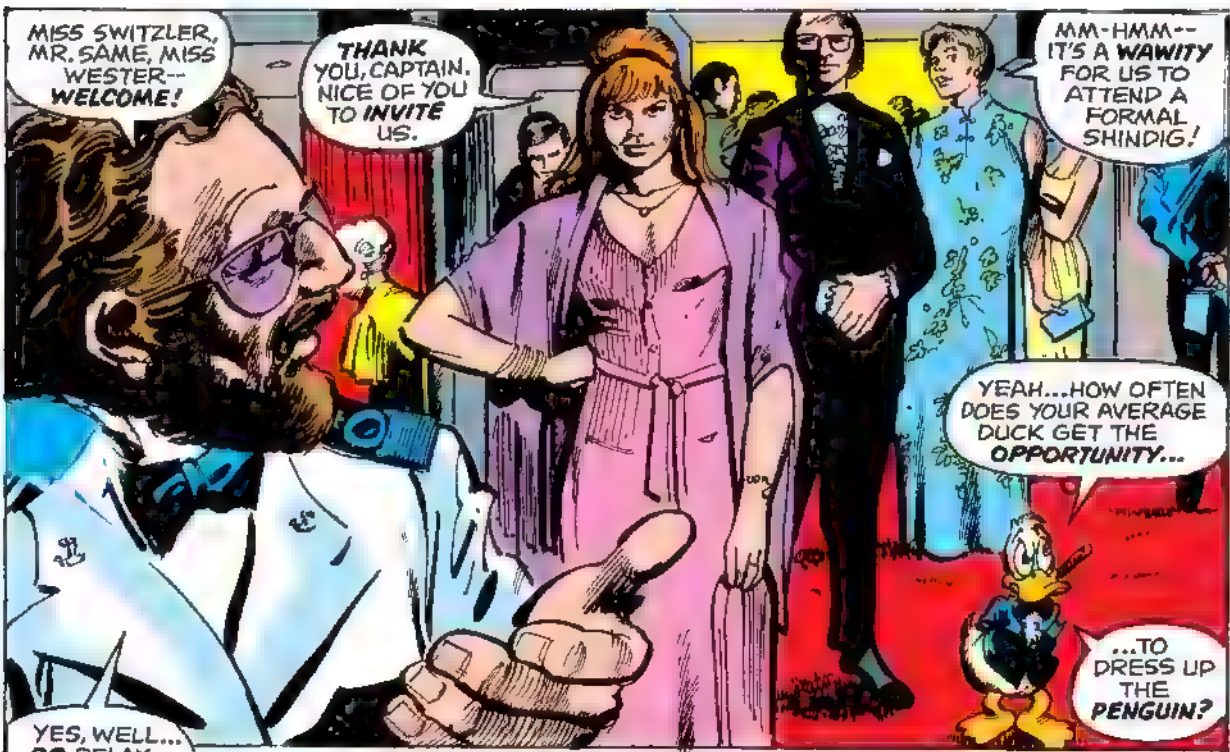
SAFE 'N' SOUND--
EXCEPT FOR THE
TARANTULAS DANC-
ING THE POLKA IN
MY STOMACH!

DON'T ASK ME HOW
--BUT THINGS'RE
GONNA GET WORSE
BEFORE THIS CRUISE
IS OVER!



DESPITE THE DUCK'S PREMONITION...

...THE VOYAGE OF THE DAMNED CONTINUES UNINTERRUPTED PAST SUNDOWN AND INTO THE MOON-LIT NIGHT.



MISS SWITZLER, MR. SAME, MISS WESTER-- WELCOME!

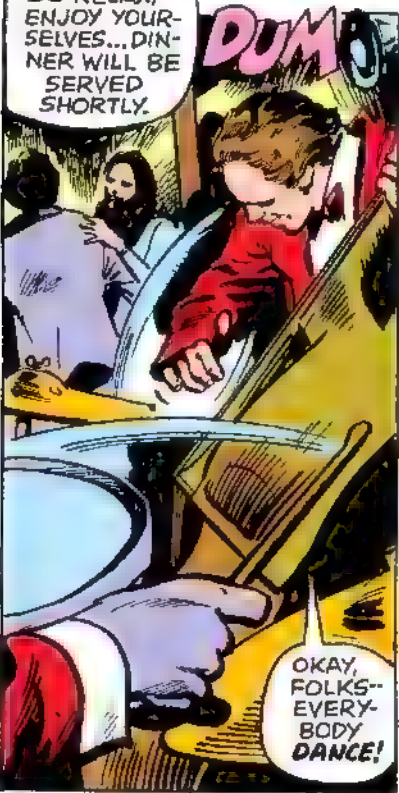
THANK YOU, CAPTAIN. NICE OF YOU TO INVITE US.

MM-HMM-- IT'S A WAWITY FOR US TO ATTEND A FORMAL SHINDIG!

YEAH...HOW OFTEN DOES YOUR AVERAGE DUCK GET THE OPPORTUNITY...

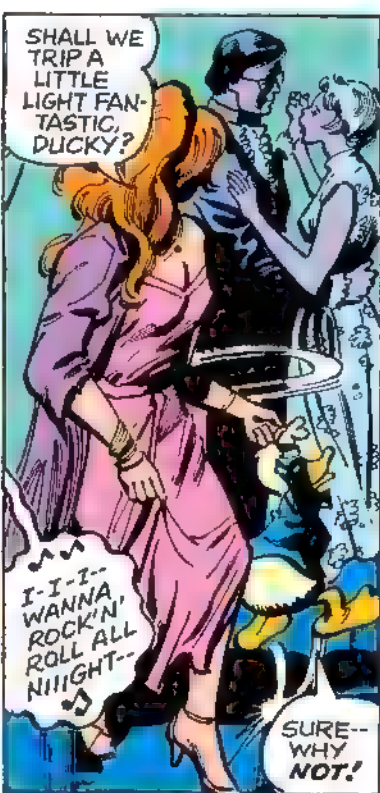
...TO DRESS UP THE PENGUIN?

YES, WELL... DO RELAX, ENJOY YOURSELVES...DIN- NER WILL BE SERVED SHORTLY.



DUM

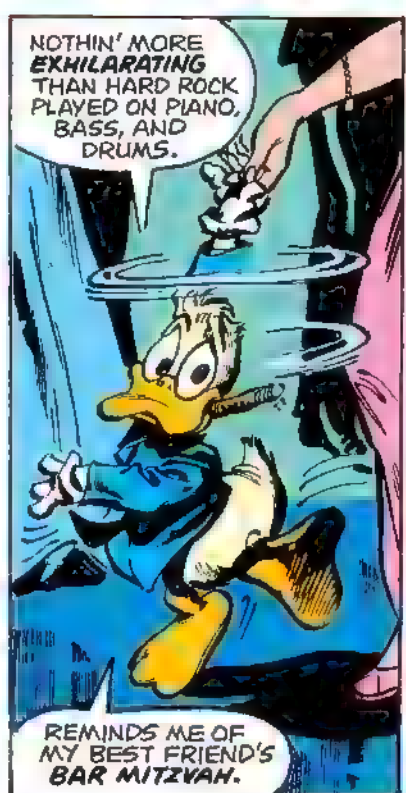
OKAY, FOLKS-- EVERY- BODY DANCE!



SHALL WE TRIP A LITTLE LIGHT FAN- TASTIC, DUCKY?

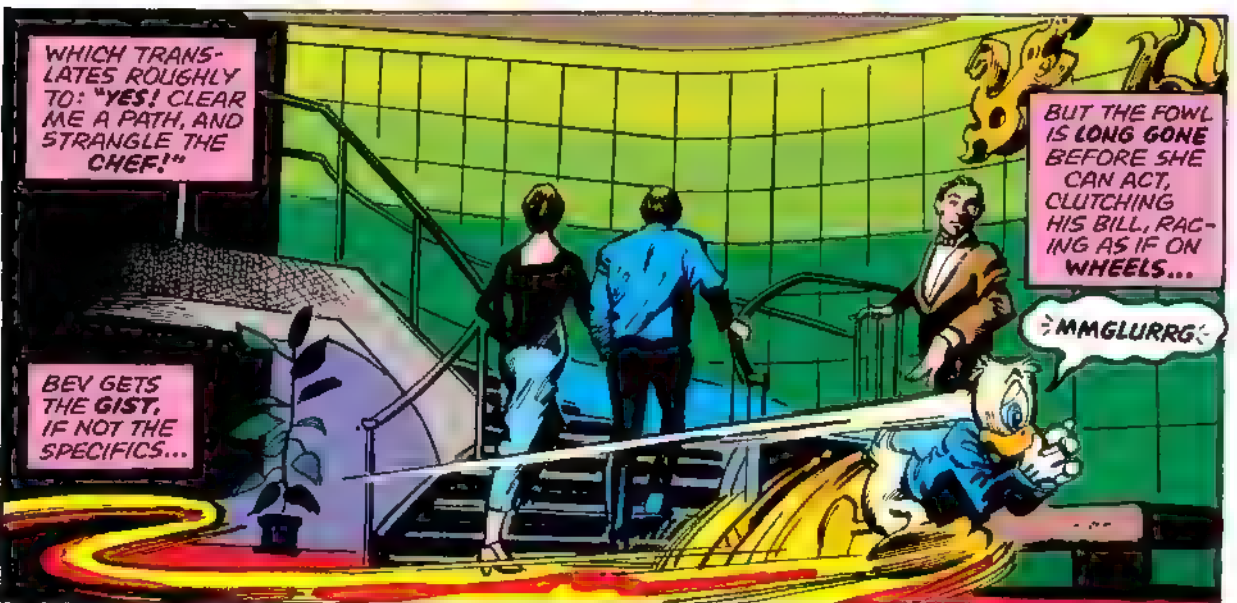
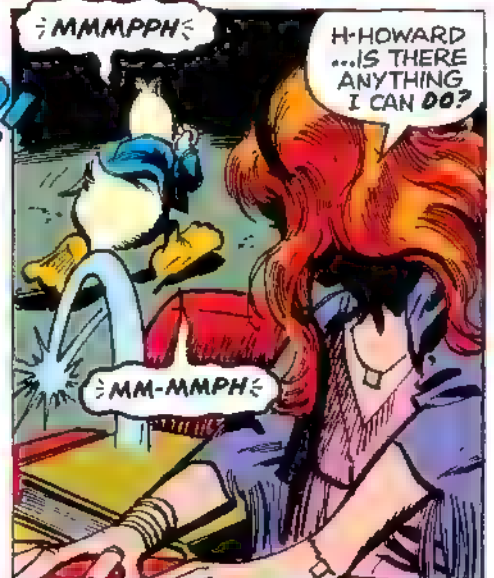
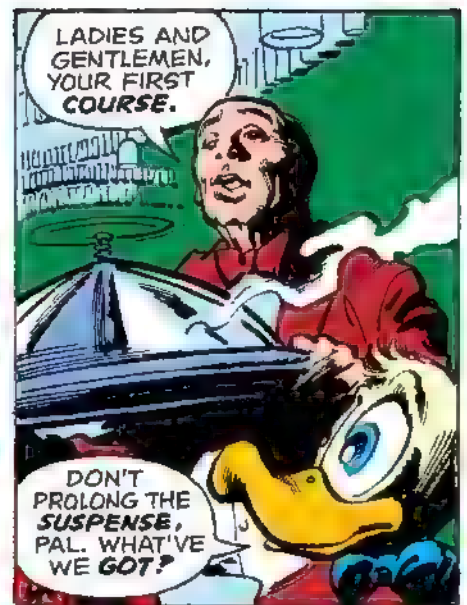
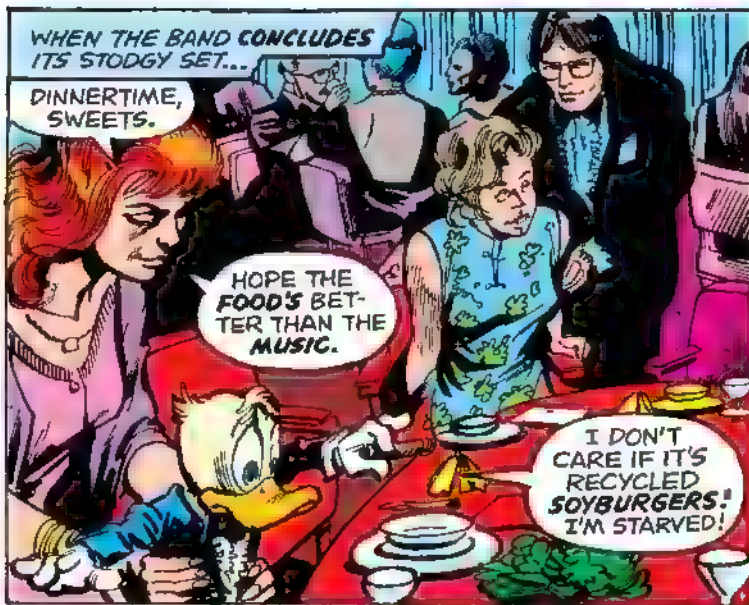
I-I-I- WANNA ROCK'N' ROLL ALL NIIIGHT--

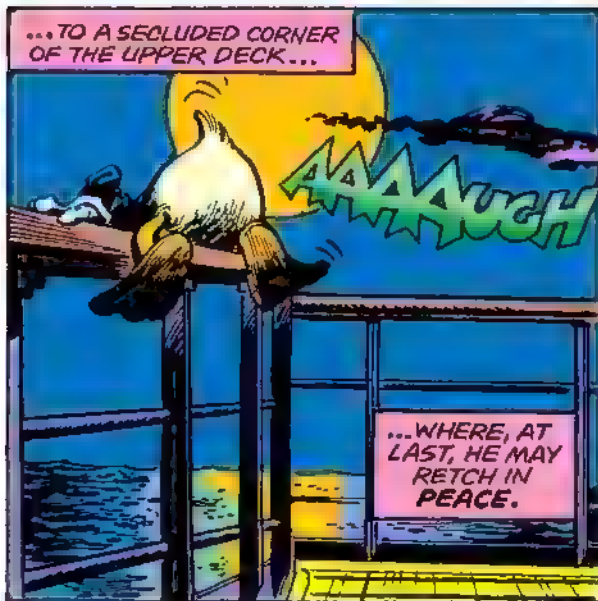
SURE-- WHY NOT!



NOTHIN' MORE EXHILARATING THAN HARD ROCK. PLAYED ON PIANO, BASS, AND DRUMS.

REMINDS ME OF MY BEST FRIEND'S BAR MITZVAH.





...TO A SECLUDED CORNER
OF THE UPPER DECK...

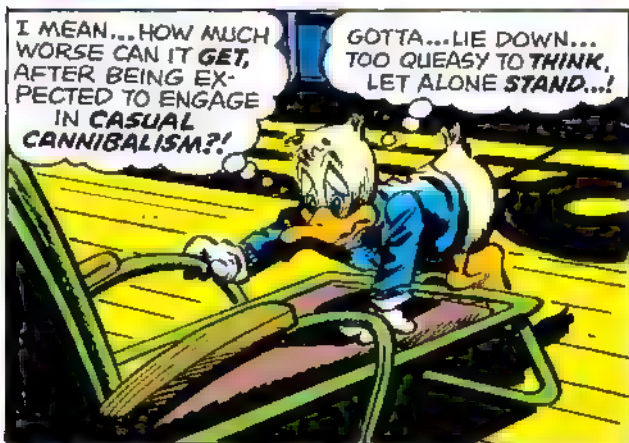
...WHERE, AT
LAST, HE MAY
RETCH IN
PEACE.



TH-THAT DID IT...
TOTAL ENERVATION!
...I CAN FEEL THE
SPIDERS CRAWLING
OUTTA MY
INTESTINES...

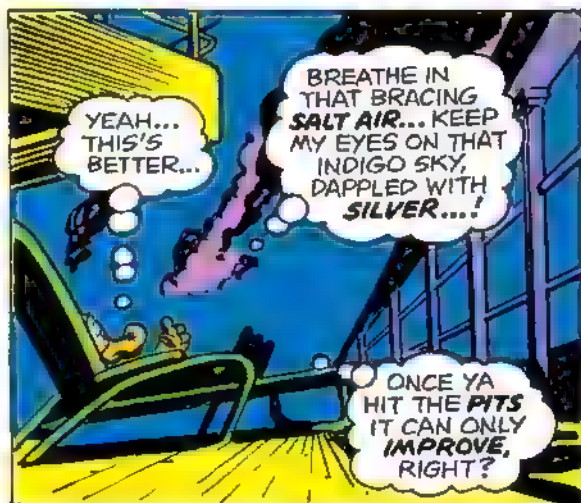
...DOWN MY
RUBBERY
LEGS...

...AN' INTO
THE DECK!
CATHARSIS!



I MEAN...HOW MUCH
WORSE CAN IT **GET**,
AFTER BEING EX-
PECTED TO ENGAGE
IN **CASUAL**
CANNIBALISM?!

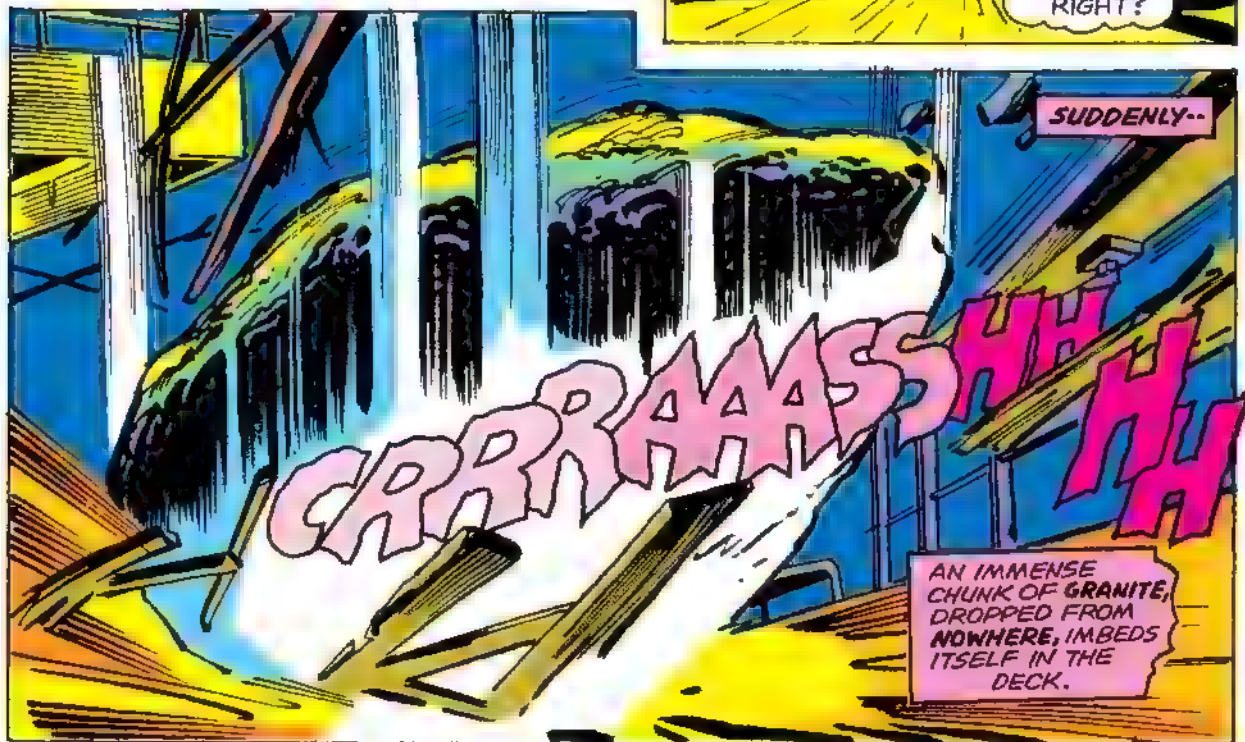
GOTTA...LIE DOWN...
TOO QUEASY TO **THINK**,
LET ALONE **STAND...!**



YEAH...
THIS'S
BETTER...

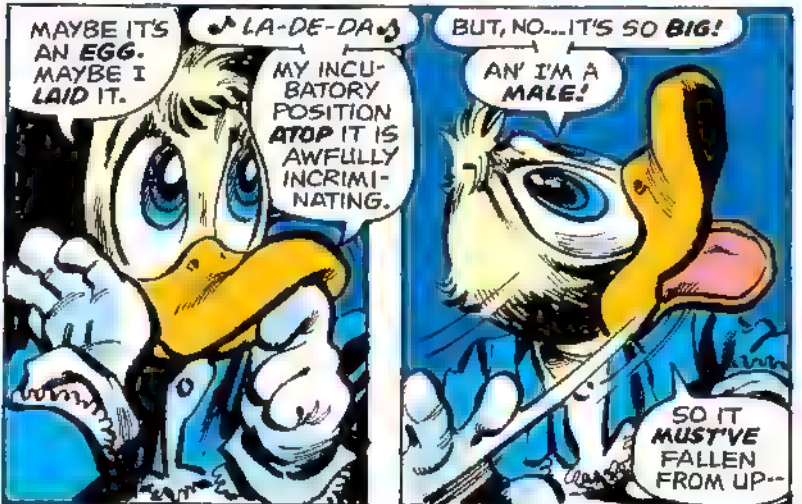
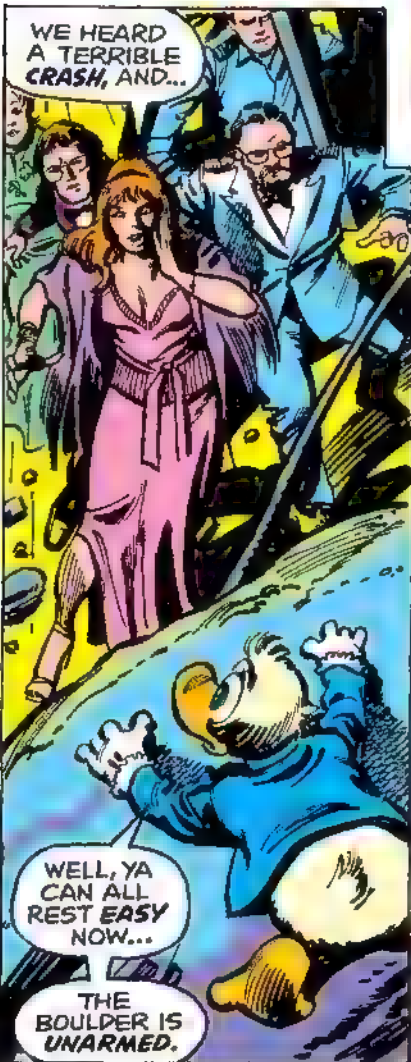
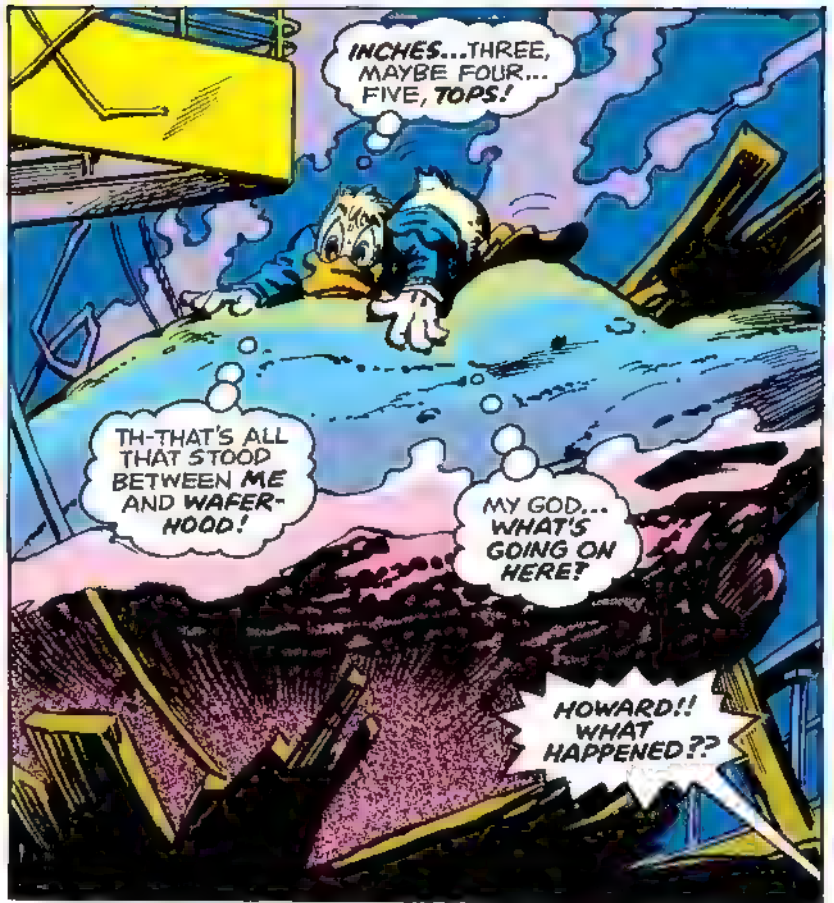
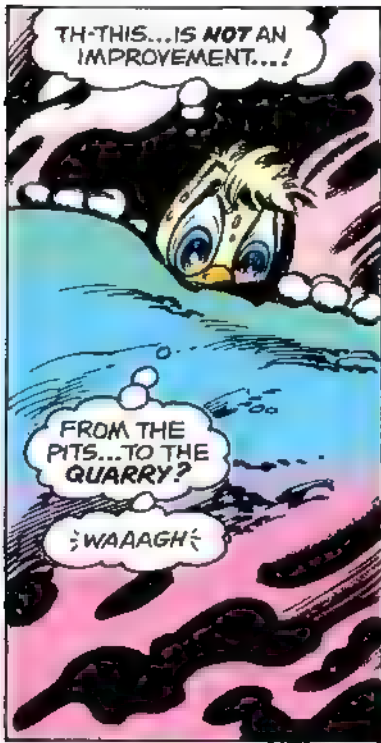
BREATHE IN
THAT BRACING
SALT AIR... KEEP
MY EYES ON THAT
INDIGO SKY,
DAPPLED WITH
SILVER...!

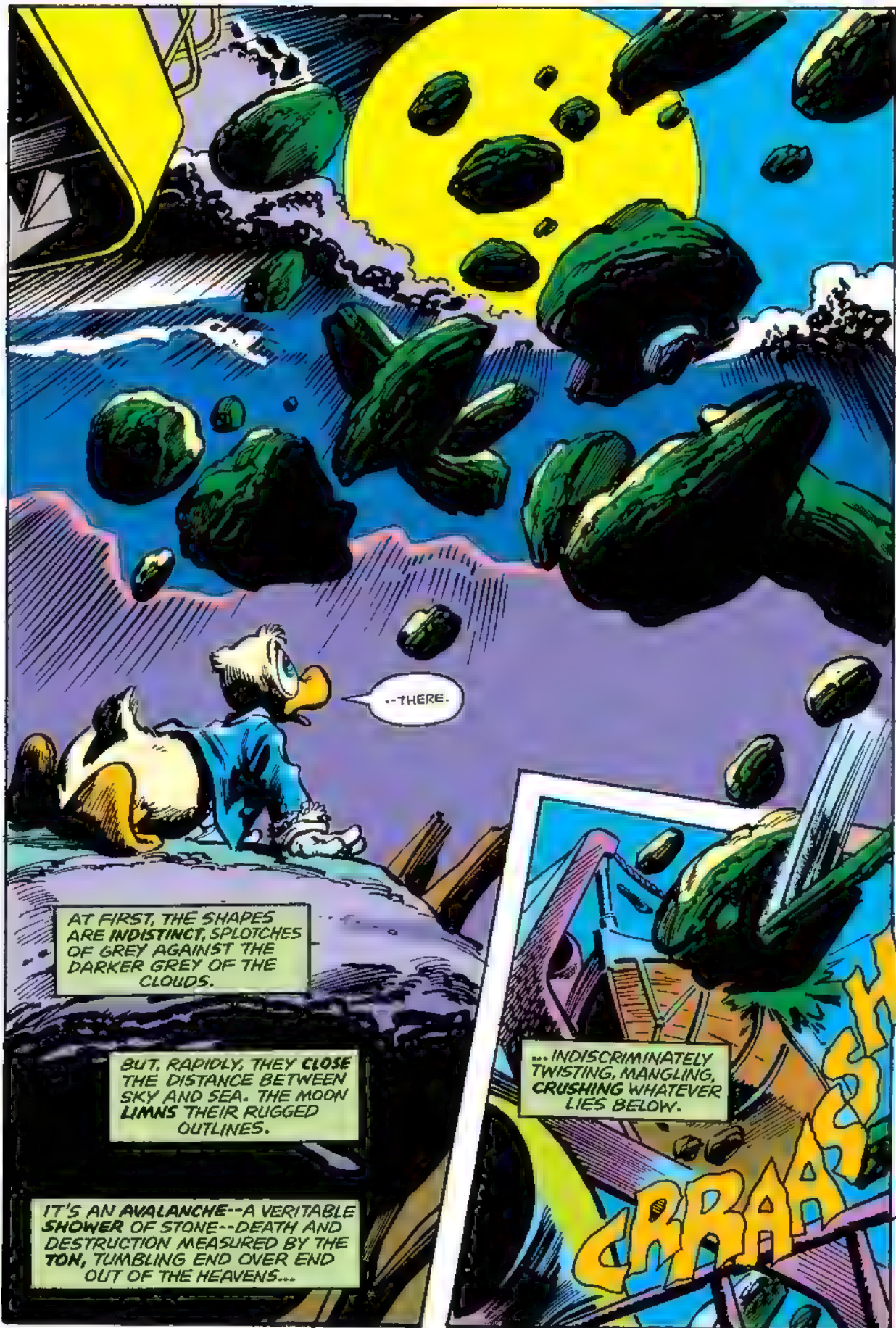
ONCE YA
HIT THE **PITS**
IT CAN ONLY
IMPROVE,
RIGHT?

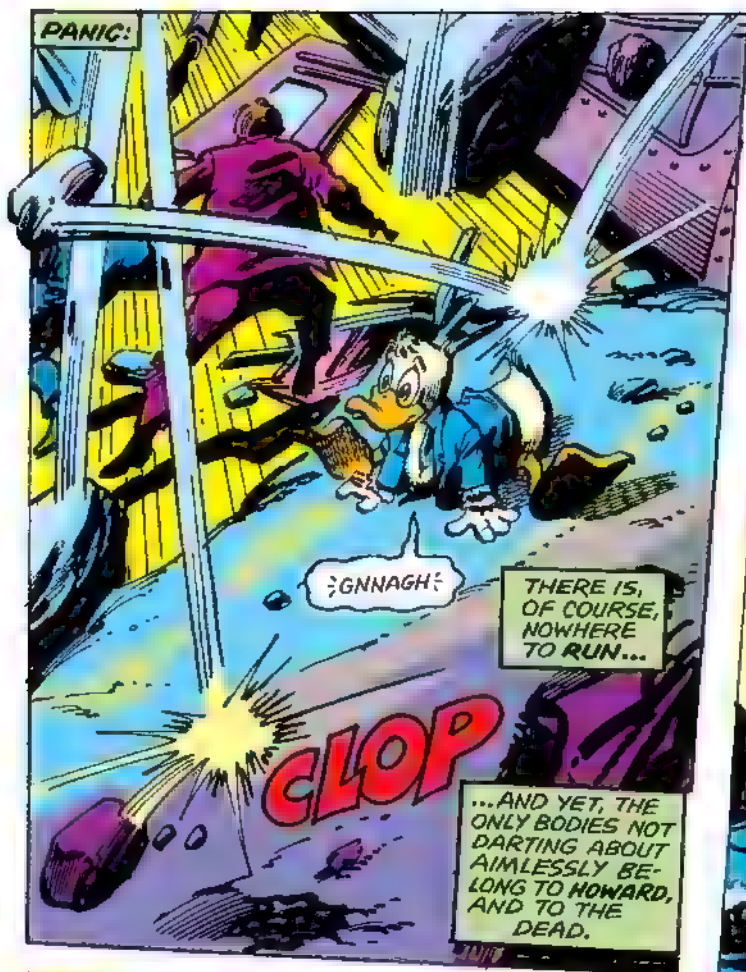


SUDDENLY--

AN IMMENSE
CHUNK OF **GRANITE**,
DROPPED FROM
NOWHERE, IMBEDS
ITSELF IN THE
DECK.







AND THE CREW
OBEYS-- EVEN TO
THE LETTER.

SPLASH

SHOOM

CALLING
ALL
DOLPHINS!

CALLING
PRINCE
NAMOR!

FLARES EXPLODE,
BELLS CLANG,
SIRENS BLEAT,
BULLHORNS
BELLOW...!

TASH

FOOSH

AWROOGAH

THE GENTLE WARMTH OF
THE MEDITERRANEAN
EVENING IS TRANSFORMED
INTO A FOURTH OF JULY
NIGHTMARE.

ALL I CAN THINK
ABOUT IS BOB DYLAN:
"EVERYBODY MUST
GET STONED."

SOMEHOW, I
ALWAYS
FIGURED HE
MEANT IT
THIS WAY.

THAT'S FUNNY--
SO DID I.

WHO'S
BOB
DYWAN?

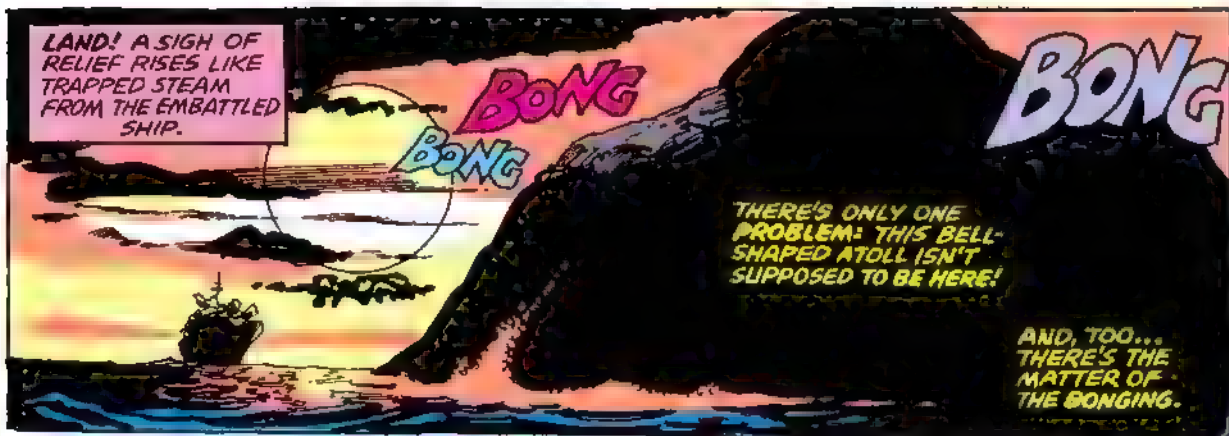
POOF

I DINNO...I
JUST HOPE
WE'RE QUOTING
SURVIVORS, NOT
MARTYRS.

HOW TWUE!
FWAME OF
MIND IS SO
IMPOR--

OH!!
WOOK!!

WAND
HO!
WAND
HO!!



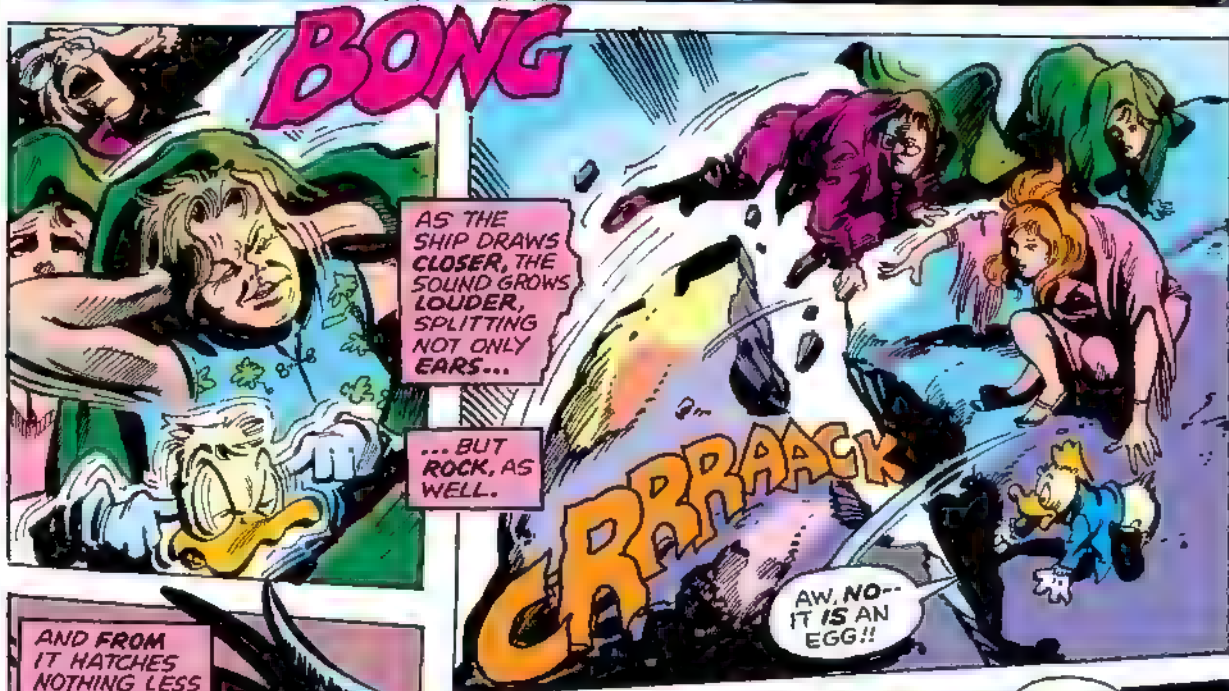
LAND! A SIGH OF RELIEF RISES LIKE TRAPPED STEAM FROM THE EMBATTLED SHIP.

BONG
BONG

THERE'S ONLY ONE PROBLEM: THIS BELL-SHAPED ATOLL ISN'T SUPPOSED TO BE HERE!

BONG

AND, TOO... THERE'S THE MATTER OF THE BONGING.



BONG

AS THE SHIP DRAWS CLOSER, THE SOUND GROWS LOUDER, SPLITTING NOT ONLY EARS...

... BUT ROCK, AS WELL.

CRRRAACK

AW, NO-- IT IS AN EGG!!



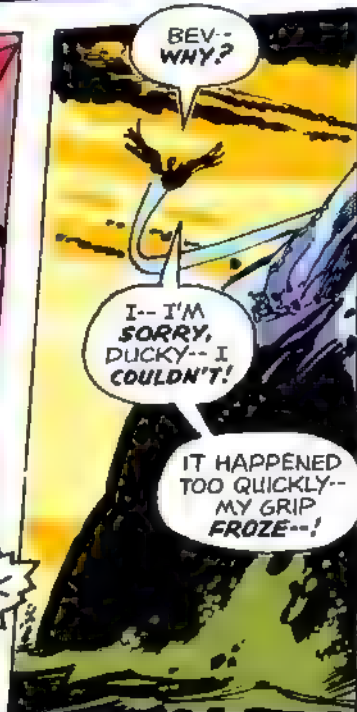
AND FROM IT HATCHES NOTHING LESS BIZARRE THAN --A CONCRETE SWAN...

EEEEY!!!

...RISING DESPITE ITS WEIGHT, DESPITE ITS UNFLAPPABLE WINGS, INTO THE SKY!

BEV!! LEGGO!!

WAAAGH



BEV-- WHY?

I-- I'M SORRY, DUCKY-- I COULDN'T!

IT HAPPENED TOO QUICKLY-- MY GRIP FROZE--!

YEAH, WELL-- WE'RE JUST LUCKY THIS AGGREGATE ABOMINATION HEADED FOR THE ISLAND!

IT COULD'A DUMPED US OVER THE OPEN SE-- **EEYOWP!**

HOWARD--
LOOK AT
THIS PLACE!
IT'S A
JUNGLE!

SPLASH

BIG
DEAL! SO'S
OHIO!

LET'S GET
TO SHORE,
HUH? WE CAN
TALK FLORA
AND FAUNA
LATER!

WHATEVER YOU
SAY! AT LEAST
THIS IS ONLY
A POND--!

RIGHT--JUST A FEW FEET
TO PADDLE--EVEN I OUGHTTA
BE ABLE TO--

--EXCEPT,
I CAN
BARELY
MOVE.

BEV?

I CAN'T
MAKE ANY
HEADWAY,
EITHER.

I KNEW
THAT LAND-
ING WAS TOO
CUSHY TO
BE TRUE!

THIS IS
QUICKSAND,
ISN'T IT?

H-HOW SHOULD
I KNOW?! I
MEAN-- IT'S NOT
LIKE THIS IS AN
EVERYDAY
OCCURRENCE
WITH ME!!

DUCKY--
TAKE MY HAND?
PLEASE? I'M
SCARED!

HOW OFTEN
DO YOU SUPPOSE
A GIRL FACES
THE TERRORS OF
NATURE, GROW-
ING UP IN
CLEVELAND??

SUDDENLY, IT
BEGINS AGAIN:
THE DEAFENING
PEAL OF THE
BELLS:

BONG BONG

BUT THIS TIME,
IT'S ACCOMPANIED
BY ANOTHER
SOUND...

...A RUSTLING
IN THE
UNDERBRUSH.

AS IF IN ANSWER TO THE
BELLS' EERIE SUMMONS, A
COTERIE OF BIZARRE BE-
INGS CREEPS OUT FROM
THE TANGLE.

NEEZ!

TH-THEY WANT
TO HELP US!!

UHM...NO
THANKS. I'LL
PASS.

NEEZ?

HONEST-- NO
OFFENSE! IT'S
JUST...IF YOU
GUYS ARE ANY
INDICATION OF
WHAT'S COMIN'..

--I'D PREFER
TO BOW OUT
NOW.

DON'T BE
FOOLISH,
BROTHER.
TAKE MY
HAND.

WAAUGH

Y-YOU'RE A

DUCK!!

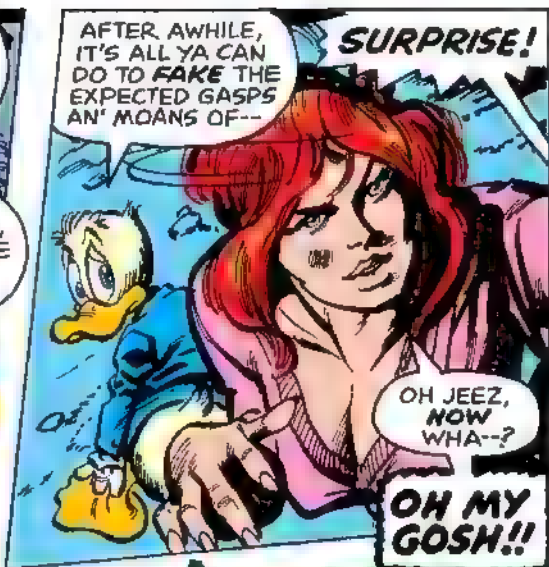


I WAS...UNTIL THE DOCTOR GAVE ME NEEZ.

I KNOW I SHOULD BE REACTING MORE --WHAT? VISIBLY TO THIS MADNESS, BUT--

DON'T APOLOGIZE, TOOTS--I'VE BEEN THERE.

BONG BONG



SURPRISE!

AFTER AWHILE, IT'S ALL YA CAN DO TO FAKE THE EXPECTED GASPS AN' MOANS OF--

OH JEEZ, NOW WHA--?

OH MY GOSH!!



AND MAY I WELCOME YOU TO THE ISLAND OF--

DR. BONG!

WHY-- HOW CHARMINGLY INARTICULATE! THANK YOU, MS. SWITZLER.

~waaagh~

UH...WHAT IF I SAID, "NO, YOU MAY NOT"?

NEXT THE ROCKY ROAD TO ANONYMITY!

HOWARD
THE DUCK™

MARVEL® COMICS GROUP



30¢ 16
SEPT
02415

TRAPPED IN A WORLD HE NEVER MADE!

HOWARD THE DUCK™

SPECIAL ONCE IN A
LIFETIME ALBUM
ISSUE!

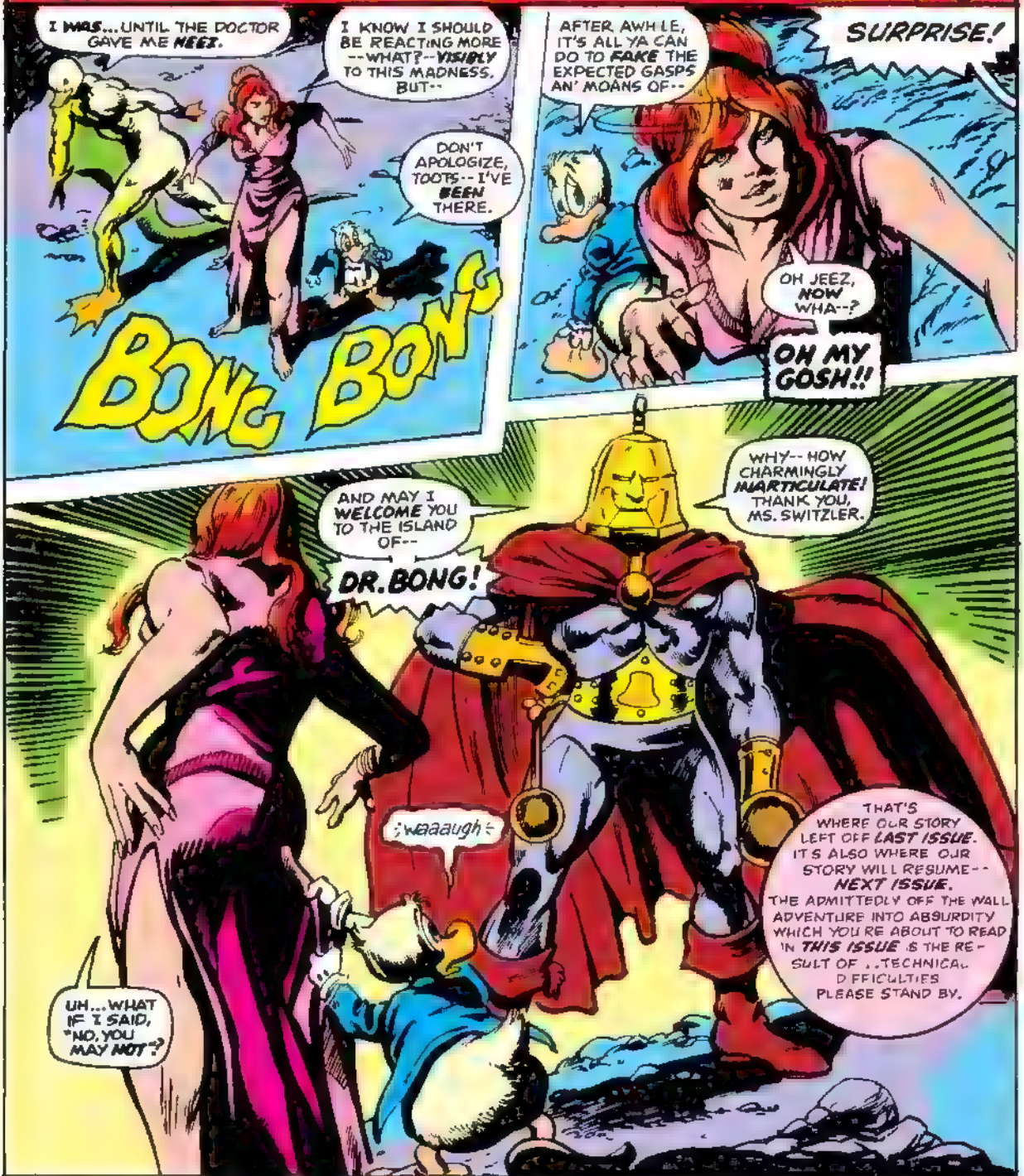


HOWARD
AT THE MERCY
OF HIS MOST
POWERFUL FOE--
THE INCREDIBLE
CREATOR!

DEADLINE DOOM!

From the time of his hatching, he was...different. A potentially brilliant scholar who dreaded the structured environment of school, he educated himself in the streets, taking whatever work was available, formulating his philosophy of self from what he learned of the world about him. And then the Cosmic Axis shifted...and that world *changed*. Suddenly, he was stranded in a universe he could not fathom. Without warning, he became a strange fowl in an even stranger land.

Stan Lee PRESENTS: **HOWARD THE DUCK!**



"Relax" I keep telling myself. "Ease up Calm down Cool off Untense Hang loose, offend no one, true behavior They will understand Just explain it to them. Candidly but with dignity They'll agree it's better than going reprint."

It is? A comic book without panels balloons, or even a plot? An essay for cryin' out loud?

Uh-huh, Gerbs. This time you've done it for sure This time you've gone too far They'll be snickering about your self-indulgent disdain for commercialism from coast to coast. You're through in this business. The only reader who'll remain loyal after this flagrant flouting of comic book conventions is Harlan Ellison. Maybe.

"On the other hand Steve, you could let Duckdom Assembled decide for itself." That inner voice again, gently prodding. "After all, what's the deal? You've already made your decision. The die is cast. No turning back, right?"

Right. But how?

"The truth, Steve. You tell them the truth, plain and undorned."

"For the past eight weeks or so (in January to mid-April), you've been laboring under tremendous pressure. You've scribbled HOWARD #15, the HTD ANNUAL, the first several weeks of continuity for the Duck's newspaper strip, and almost single-handedly, you've edited, written, and produced the 64-page KISS magazine. This last required your presence in the bullpen almost daily for at least a few hours over that two-month span. Hours which should've been spent at your desk, writing."

"Consequently, you fell severely behind on your deadlines. You caused John Verpoorten, Marvel's production manager, no end of grief. And, incidentally, you shot your nerves completely to hell."

Bob stories are a dime a dozen, inner pal.

"Don't interrupt yourself, Steve. We're just getting to the kick. Or while you were busily burning out your mind and body with all this writing and editing and stuff, you were also attempting to clear out your luxurious Hell's Kitchen abode and ship your motley possessions off into the sunset in advance of your impending move to Las Vegas."

Yes. It was heaven, those eight weeks.

"And you cracked under the strain. Come on. Admit it. To yourself first, and then the readers. You fell apart, that's all. For some very good reasons. So you were late sending out the synopsis for HTD #18 to Gene Colan, and it looked like this issue would have to go reprint until..."

until Columbia, Missouri, midway on my drive to Vegas when the idea for this special story or essay or true confession, or whatever it is, struck me like a bolt from the sun. Lots of big pictures. Lots of words. All about the relationship between a boy and his Duck. And comics in general. And diving at the precipice, playing the Balance Game over the cosmic chasm flled with lime jelly.

"Correct. Like an idiot, you voluntarily took on the pressure of producing this instant issue rather than allowing the magazine to go reprint. You did it for the readers."

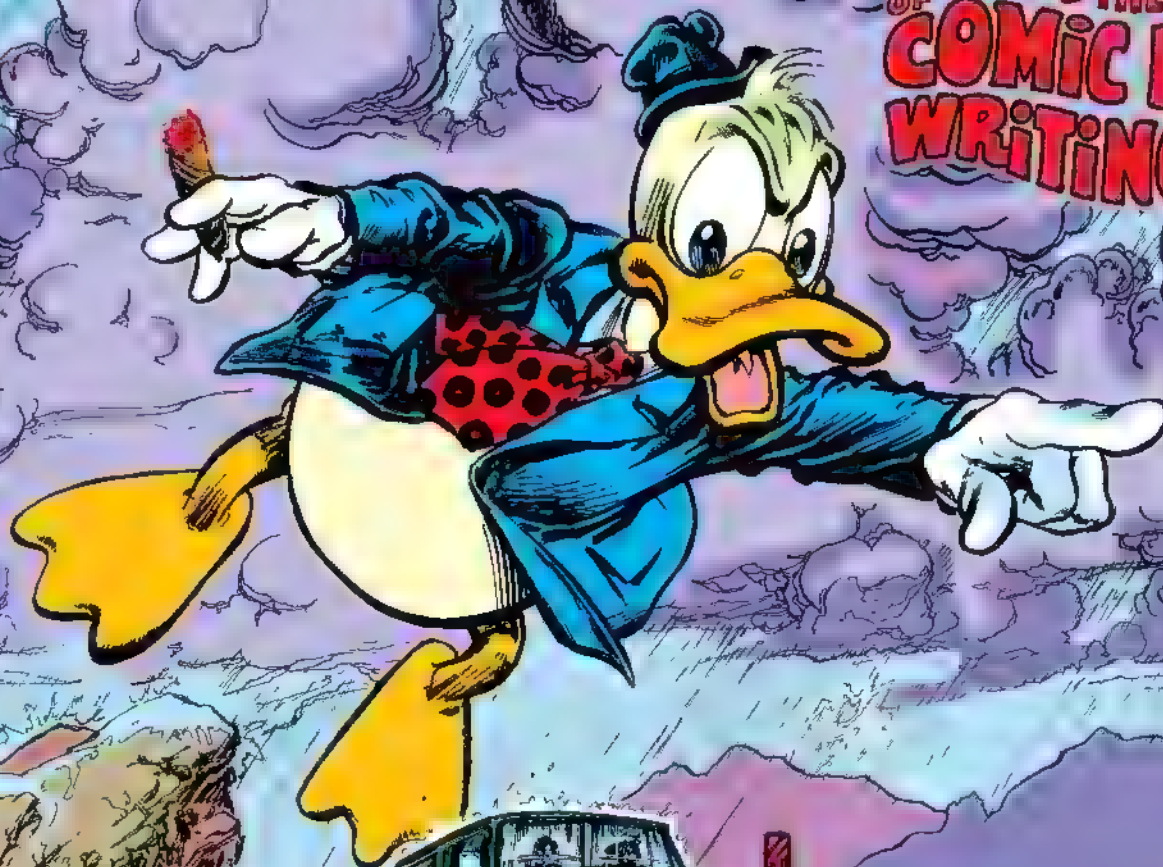
Uh-huh. And you really think they'll understand?

"I don't know, Steve. But you've got fourteen pages left in which to convince em. If I were you, I'd get on it. Hustle. Get Go! Go!"

Swell.

ZEN AND THE ART OF COMIC BOOK WRITING

A COMMUNIQUE FROM COLORADO



STEVE GERBER, WRITER/EDITOR
CAST OF THOUSANDS, ARTISTS
IRV WATANABE, LETTERING
DOC MARTIN, COLORIST
ED HANNIGAN & NELSON YOMTOV,
PRODUCTION

I. writers are like people

As mentioned, I am en route to Las Vegas. (To live, not to gamble. Assuming there's a difference.) I've just spent five days on the road, crossing New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri and Kansas. Five days of refinery fumes, gently rolling boredom, old friends, fast food, Indian burial mounds, family, and flatlands. In that order.

Howard is travelling with me, as he does wherever I roam. He's there in my head. He won't go away. He is as much a highway marker as the green and white signs that weigh heavy on the shoulders of Interstate 70. He is, in a word, real.

We're in Colorado now, in historic Georgetown, a little hamlet about thirty-five minutes west of Denver housing perhaps 700 persons. Moving inexorably from the general to the even more specific, we're seated in a booth in a restaurant called the Happy Cooker, which specializes in Belgian waffles. Like the rest of historic Georgetown, the Cooker is clean, quiet, and quaint. Its large windows look out on the mountains to the south and admit vast quantities of sunshine into the dining area. The plants—in shelves on the windows, on hooks in the ceiling—soak up the rays and turn the precise shade of green to complement the golden brown Belgian waffles. It's a minor miracle of color co-ordination.

Plants are like people. Writers are like plants. Therefore, and this may come as a surprise, writers are like people. Give them light, water, nourishment, a comfortable pot, and an encouraging word, and they'll grow Real. They'll blossom. They'll create things of beauty.



This principle applies to most varieties of human beings. If other people would accord them as much consideration as they do their plants, they too, would bloom. Of course, plants don't talk back, which makes them much less annoying to have around the house. This may or may not explain why so many of our institutions seem to devote themselves to the task of turning people into vegetables rather than treating them with the same kindness we lavish upon the already mute. We tend to prefer stumps over trees. You can sit on a stump.

Some writers require more room than others to flourish. Some grow vertically, some laterally or radially, others in vast spaghetti-like tangles. Again, just like plants.

I'm of the spaghetti bread. I'm fascinated by the marinara-splattered pasta of existence, the unreasonably absurd aspects of human relations and of storytelling. My plots are very thick and saucy.

One moment. Across the table, Howard looks up from his Waffle Surprise and groans. "You're rambling, Gerber. Get to the point, why?" Talk about me.

"In a minute," I advise him. "I'm building toward an important principle here."

Unlike some of my colleagues, I do not plot my stories months and months in advance. In fact, the "next issue" blurb at the end of each story is always the most difficult line for me to write. I change my mind like some people change underwear. Ideas go stale for me as quickly as... well, you get the gist. I'm easily bored.

Characters who cannot change as rapidly, as mercurially as I do anesthetize me. Characters can become institutions devoted to making vegetables out of writers.

Howard looks up again, raises an eyebrow. "Not bad. You may continue."

Thank you, your honor.

I have found this fowl to be as plantlike as most writers. As complex, as unpredictable, as adaptable to new circumstances, and as totally screwed-up in the head.

I can relate to Howard the Duck because he will never become an institution.

"An. I can relate to you, too, pal. But only cause we've got the same taste in women."



"Somethin's eatin' at you, Gerber, an' it's not just deadlines or pressures or work either I've watched you hairless apea. When you whack out, it's for deeper reasons than that, stuff you can't talk about or won't."

"Yes, I suppose that's true." I mumble.

"You suppose. That's great. By the way, when did the Human Torch first appear in a solo adventure in the Marvel Age of Comics?"

"Huh? STRANGE TALES #101. Why?"

"And who were the villains in the first fifty issues of FANTASTIC FOUR in order?"

"Uh. Mole Man, the Skrulls, the Miracle Man, Sub-Mariner, Dr. Doom, Subby and Doom together, Kurg, Puppet Master, Sub-Mariner again, Dr. Doom, Impossible Man, Hulk, Red Ghost, Subby again, The Mad Thinker, Dr. Doom, Dr. Doom."

"Stop!"

"Whew. Gladly. Thanks. What was the point of—"

"I just wanted ya to see for yerself how much trivia yo-i were carryin' around in yer head. It's gotta be crowdin' out the important stuff or keepin' it safely suppressed. I bet ya could rattle off a complete list of yer next fifty deadlines, too. 'B it when I ask you about yer psychological posture, you suppose."

"Now wait, just a moment, my web-footed wagi! As far as you're concerned that's not trivia. It's history. Where do you figure you'd be today without the first fifty issues of FF? Moreover, that kind of question doesn't require subjective evaluation, just a good memory. When you start asking for opinions about the nature of the mind."

"Your mind, Gerber. Not the mind."

"Howard, you're chasing your tail feathers in this conversation. What are you trying to say?"

"I told ya. Somethin's eatin' you, an' ya won't talk about it. You keep retreatin' to the abstract to avoid positions about intangibles like boredom and institutions and society. There was a reason you wanted to write this dumb essay, an' yet you refuse to let me or the readers in on it."

"Oh."

"Or? That's all ya got to say for yerself? You, the big

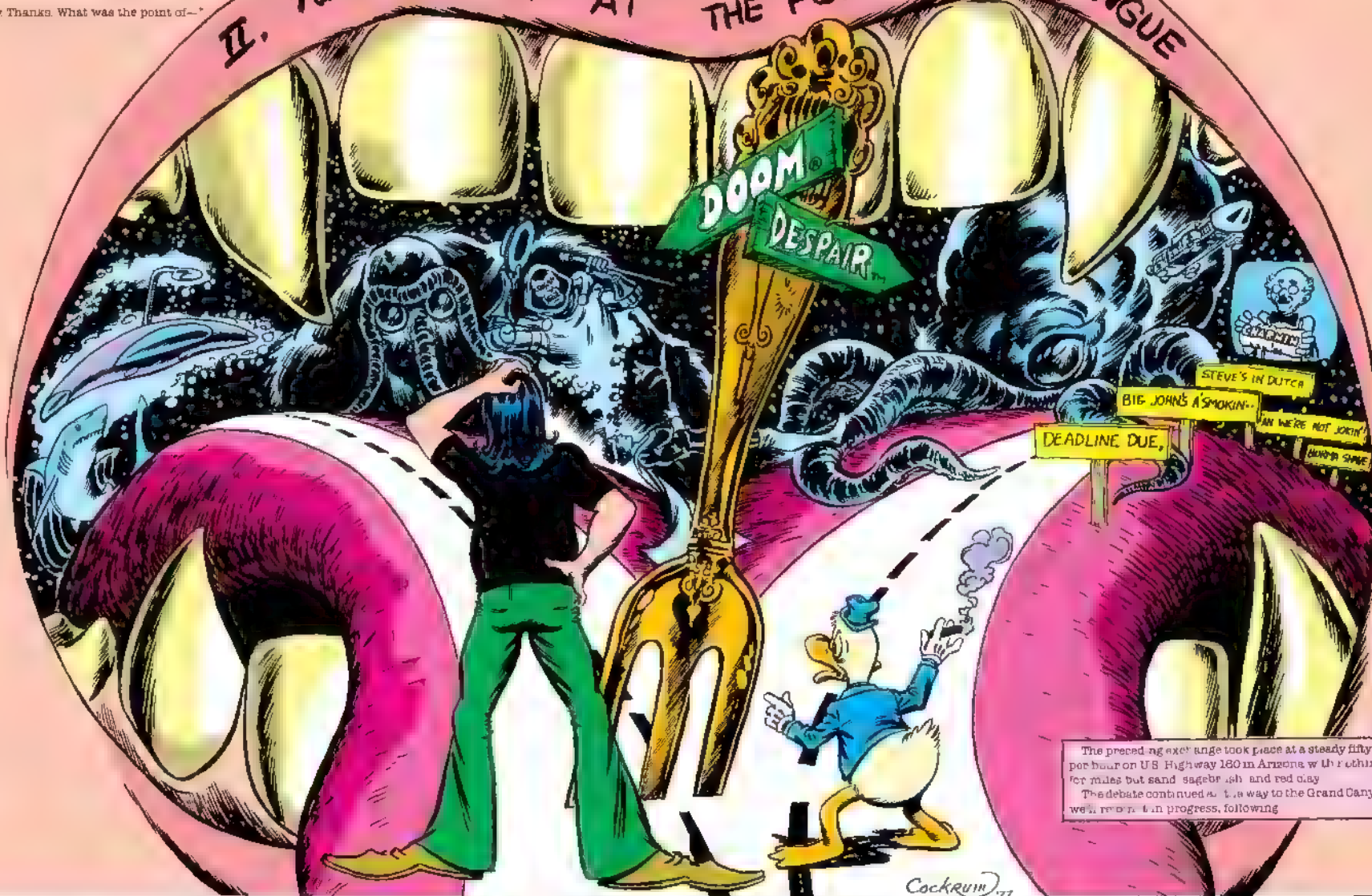
humanist, the creative writer, the fragile flower of literature? That's the best ya can do, genius. No wonder my dialogue's been so banal lately."

"Howard."

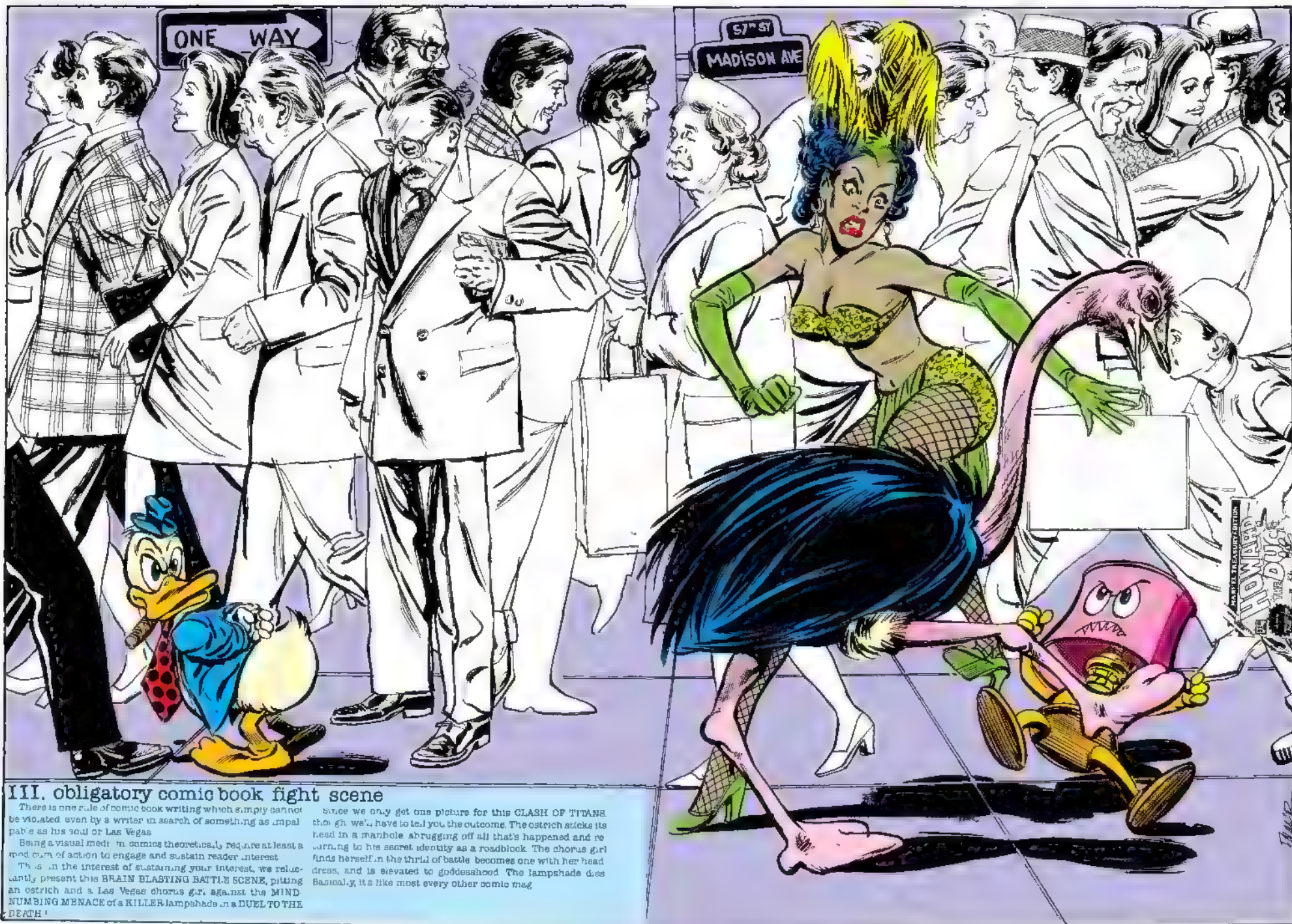
"You know what, Gerbs? Deep down I've always suspected you don't know as much as yer stories would infer. You've earned how to manipulate words and pictures to give a semblance of profundity, but it's all superficial. Cosmetic surgery performed on creaky old ideas and thoughts. Wreddaya say to that?"

"I say that, uh, on occasion I've harbored similar suspicions. Howard."

II. TURN LEFT AT THE FORK IN THE TONGUE



The preceding exchange took place at a steady fifty-five miles per hour on US Highway 180 in Arizona, where nothing is sight for miles but sand, sagebrush, and red clay. The debate continued all the way to the Grand Canyon, where we're, respectively, in progress, following.



III. obligatory comic book fight scene

There is one rule of comic book writing which simply cannot be violated, even by a writer in search of something as impalpable as his soul or Las Vegas.

Being a visual medium, comics theoretically require at least a modicum of action to engage and sustain reader interest.

Thus, in the interest of sustaining your interest, we reluctantly present this BRAIN ELASTIC BATTLE SCENE, pitting an ostrich and a Las Vegas chorus girl against the MIND NUMBING MENACE of a KILLER lampshade in a DUEL TO THE DEATH!

Since we only get one picture for this CLASH OF TITANS, though we'll have to tell you the outcome. The ostrich sticks its head in a manhole, shrugging off all that's happened and returning to his secret identity as a roadblock. The chorus girl finds herself in the thrill of battle becomes one with her head dress, and is elevated to goddesshood. The lampshade dies. Basically, it's like most every other comic mag.

THOR

iv. ... and visions of sugar plums



"Majestic a bit, it?" Howard asks, obviously unimpressed.
 "Yes," I reply, trying my best to sound contemplative and faintly.

"The Colorado River took eons to carve this steep sinuous monster object dark outta some flat, hard plateau—almost as long as you're takin' gettin' to the point o' this story."

"Howard, it seems vaguely blasphemous to engage in petty banter about human problems in the face of this—this—"

"Heh?"

"I don't believe you said that."

"Look, Jerber, it's not like nature dug this oversized storm drain with the specific intent o' creatin' a tourist attraction. It exists because the river did what it was supposed to do—it flowed. And the rocks did what they were supposed to do—they eroded. Guys like you are just envious 'cause nature didn't have to put any thought into its work. You wanna be able to write the same way—only writing isn't a natural process. Nature only hadda make somethin' outta nothin' once in its whole career. You've gotta do it daily. If God had had your temperament, the universe would still be a box o' typewriter paper waitin' to be opened."

I stare dumbly at my friend the Duck, pleading with my eyes for him to continue. He turns away, shaking his head, folding his arms over his chest in disgust. He won't talk to me, and I don't know what to say. After some deliberation I arrive at the following gem: "Communication takes a lot of energy, Howard."

He scowls.

I light a cigarette.

We both sit there for a long moment, wordlessly gazing at the spectacle of the canyon.

"You know what that canyon really is, Jerber? It's the world's biggest most convoluted rut."

I laugh involuntarily. "I've gotta hand it to you, pal. That's definitely a new interpretation of the phenomenon."

"An that tight lipped smile tryin' ta show its way onto yer face is the first sign of spontaneity I've seen 'rom you in eleven pages. Loosen up, will ya. Save the theorizin' for the speech. Communication majors o' this world! You're outta school, now, big boy. You're pushin' thirty with a bulldozer. There's no how-to manual on one-to-one interaction between allegedly intelligent beings. The way to communicate is just...do it!"

"Be myself you mean. Yeah. Mmm-hmm. That's terrific advice, Howard. Thank you. Wowee. Why didn't I think of that?"

"It ain't that simple, turkey. Ya gotta be yerself without tryin' like the river down there."

"Or the eroding rocks, for that matter, huh?"

"Yeah, well, yer not gettin' any younger. But ya got the choice, rocks or river. I figger you've been stonewallin' it too long already." He stands, brushes the dust off his feathers and coat, and turns to walk away. "Listen, I'm gonna grab a bite to eat. They got a great processed ham sandwich in that restaurant next to the souvenir gift shop with the Taiwan manufactured Indian beads. Why don't you sit here alone a bit an' meditate on the natural splendor while I gorge myself on preserves? Free associate. See what ya come up with. Tell the folks at home a story. An whatever ya do, plan on bein' more interesting next time we meet."

VI tell the people a story

Ramsludge Hawthorne looked at the assortment of official forms fanned out across the modest expanse of the coffee table. All of the forms began with the same three words: "Please Print Clearly." All of the forms asked for the same information: name, address, city, state, zip age, married, single, separated, divorced, annual income, father's name, father's address, mother's maiden name, mother's maiden address, health good fair poor

do you certify that you have answered all questions on this form completely and truthfully to the best of your knowledge? signature, date. The tax forms in the assortment even asked for spare change. Panhandling by mail, Ramsludge thought. Gimme, gimme, gimme. Your money, your word, your life, your every waking moment. And remember, your record will follow you wherever you roam, biting at your heels like a rabid dog. We own you, look, stock, and zip code.

"You only own me as long as I continue to exist," Ramsludge snarled at the forms, which responded with the same old questions.

Ramsludge's wife, the former Remarks Demonstrata, heard

her husband's comment as she entered the living room with her knitting basket. Remarks would almost have been beautiful had she been born a dwarf sim, as a woman, however she was an aesthetically disaster short and spindly with a full head of leaves. She plopped herself in the easy chair across the coffee table from the sofa where Ramsludge was still hunched for ward, foaming at the forms. "Gonna off yourself hubby-dubby?" she queried enthusiastically. "Your insurance all paid up I hope? Hope?"

"Darling," Ramsludge hissed, "your mind as barren as your scalp is fecund."

"Yes," Remarks sighed, folding her hands in her lap, turning her gaze heavenward. "That's why we have such a full and happy life together, Brrrrrrramsludge." He hated it when she grew old his name.

"Actually," Ramsludge said, "I was thinking of deserting you going into hiding, adopting a new name and perhaps a puppy

from Bide-a-Wee, establishing a new identity for myself, something less oppressive."

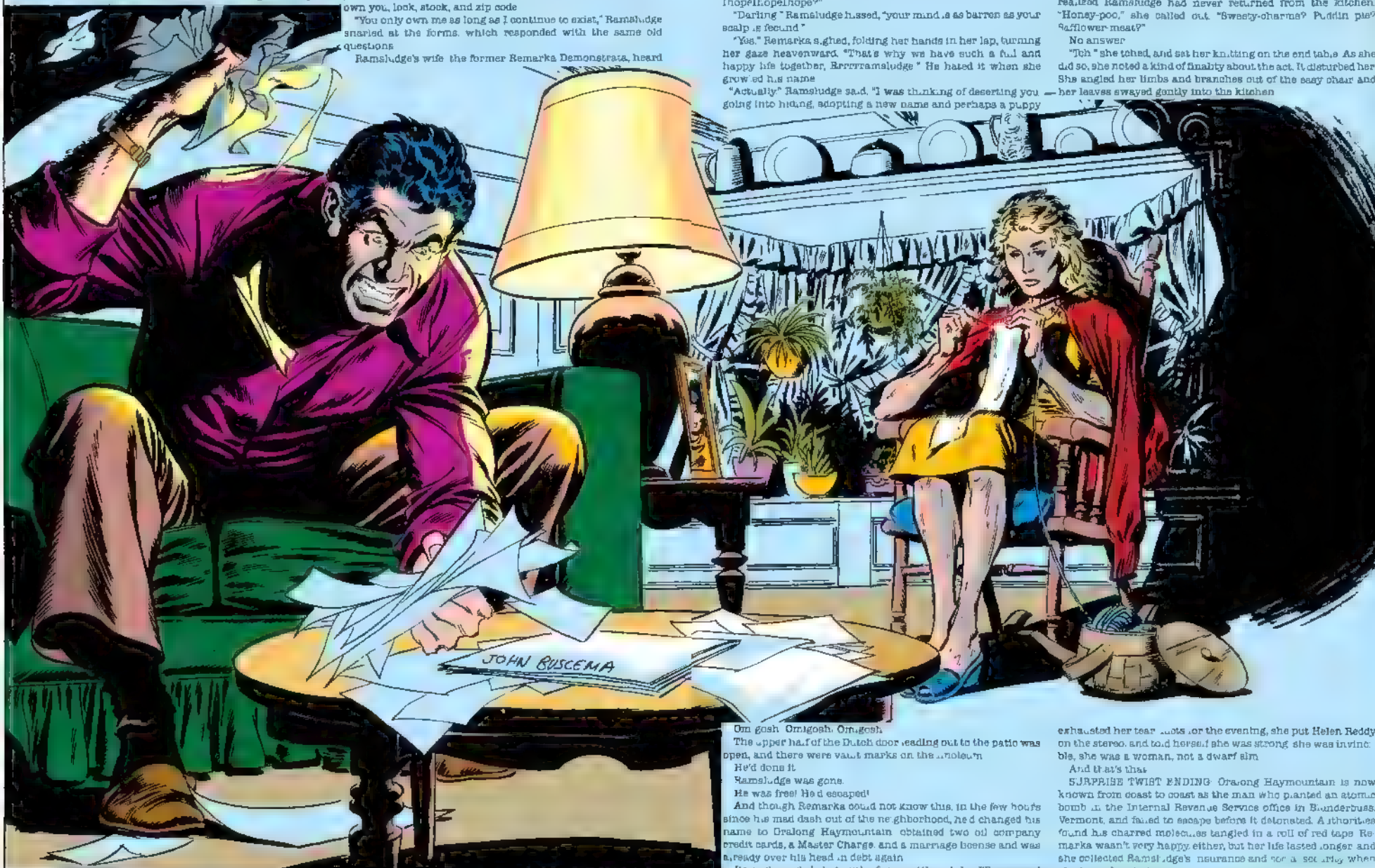
"Aw, g'wan!"

"Okay, I will." And with that, Ramsludge leaped from the sofa, over the coffee table, and bounded into the kitchen. Remarks sighed, smiled stupidly, and undertook to knit a little bue booty. "Tee hee," she giggled at the needles.

It was some hours and one completed booty later that she realized Ramsludge had never returned from the kitchen. "Honey-poo," she called out. "Sweaty-charms? Puddin' pie? Rafflower meat?"

No answer.

"Teh," she cooed, and set her knitting on the end table. As she did so, she noted a kind of finality about the act. It disturbed her. She angled her limbs and branches out of the easy chair and her leaves swayed gently into the kitchen.



Om gosh. Omigosh. Omigosh. The upper half of the Dutch door leading out to the patio was open, and there were vault marks on the masonry. He'd done it.

Ramsludge was gone.

He was free! He'd escaped!

And though Remarks could not know this, in the few hours since his mad dash out of the neighborhood, he'd changed his name to Orulong Haymountain, obtained two oil company credit cards, a Master Charge, and a marriage license and was already over his head in debt again.

Remarks cried, but only for a little while. When she

exhausted her tear ducts for the evening, she put Helen Reddy on the stereo, and told herself she was strong, she was invincible, she was a woman, not a dwarf sim.

And that's that.

SURPRISE TWIST ENDING Orulong Haymountain is now known from coast to coast as the man who planted an atomic bomb in the Internal Revenue Service office in Branderburg, Vermont, and failed to escape before it detonated. Authorities found his charred molecules tangled in a roll of red tape. Remarks wasn't very happy either, but her life lasted longer and she collected Ramsludge's insurance and for a salary when she turned sixty-two.

"Okay, class, now let's analyze the preceding story," says the professor. "I think we can all agree that its literary merit is nil, and thus our approach must be from a psychological viewpoint. Any objections?"

The class shakes its head.

"Good. Then let us proceed. We have here the product of an extremely hostile individual, with readily apparent paranoid tendencies. But he is more fearful than angry, more humiliated than vengeful. He can only conceive of escape from a given unpleasant situation. Coping behavior like communication requires too great an expenditure of energy. Now, how can we deduce these facts?"

"First, once we see Behold the icky man! His name perfectly encapsulates his character. Ramsdudge, he is called. The strong masculine—but significantly sheepish—first syllable, coupled with the concept of slime, waste, and unpleasant odors. The writer feels that the male in this society is like a sheep who is allowed to live only so long as he can be shorn. Then he's slaughtered for chape. Obviously, the author also feels both compassion and propinquity with and to his beset and endangered protagonist. Do we agree, class?"

The class nods.

"The last name, too, is symbolic, being that of an early American literary figure, now hopelessly outdated, and also that of a tree, which again surely not coincidentally is now both author and protagonist view the female. Got that?"

"Plodding odiously onward we find Ramsdudge engaged in a conversation with income tax forms, loan forms, insurance forms, etc. We can, I think, infer from this pathetic presentation of the male the author's own attitude toward bureaucracy. There is clearly antipathy extant 'twixt the writer and officialdom. Doo-weh."

"The woman is a stereotypical preliberation caricature, toward whom the author also harbors hostilities. He compares her with a tree, or more accurately a shrub, which takes root and vegetates in one place. Yet she mockingly growls his name, as if to say 'haha hoho and heehee, I dare you to come and transplant me, tiger.' So, like her analog the tree, her unquestionably superior strength lies in her relatively immovable nature. Obviously she perceives the Hawthorne as crowding out the dwarf elm, eating up all the nutrients in the soil, and she wants the larger hungrier tree to die. The Hawthorne, of course, concedes. The home is her turf. He runs away. Any questions, class?"

The class raises its hand, and the professor nods in its direction.

"Are you suggesting, sir, that the author's theme might be the irreconcilable differences between the sexes?" inquires the class.

"I'm suggesting that this clown doesn't believe two hairless apes can inhabit the same clucking planet if one of 'em happens to be him."

"See, once he makes his big dramatic exit, class, he proceeds to embed himself in the same stupid woes he suffered during his marriage to Remark. Ultimately, he even blasts himself to kingdom come. The guy's worse than a born loser—he's a rat who only knows how to run one maze. He stands in terror of his life pattern, but that's all he does—stands. And that's where his tree-ness comes into the picture."

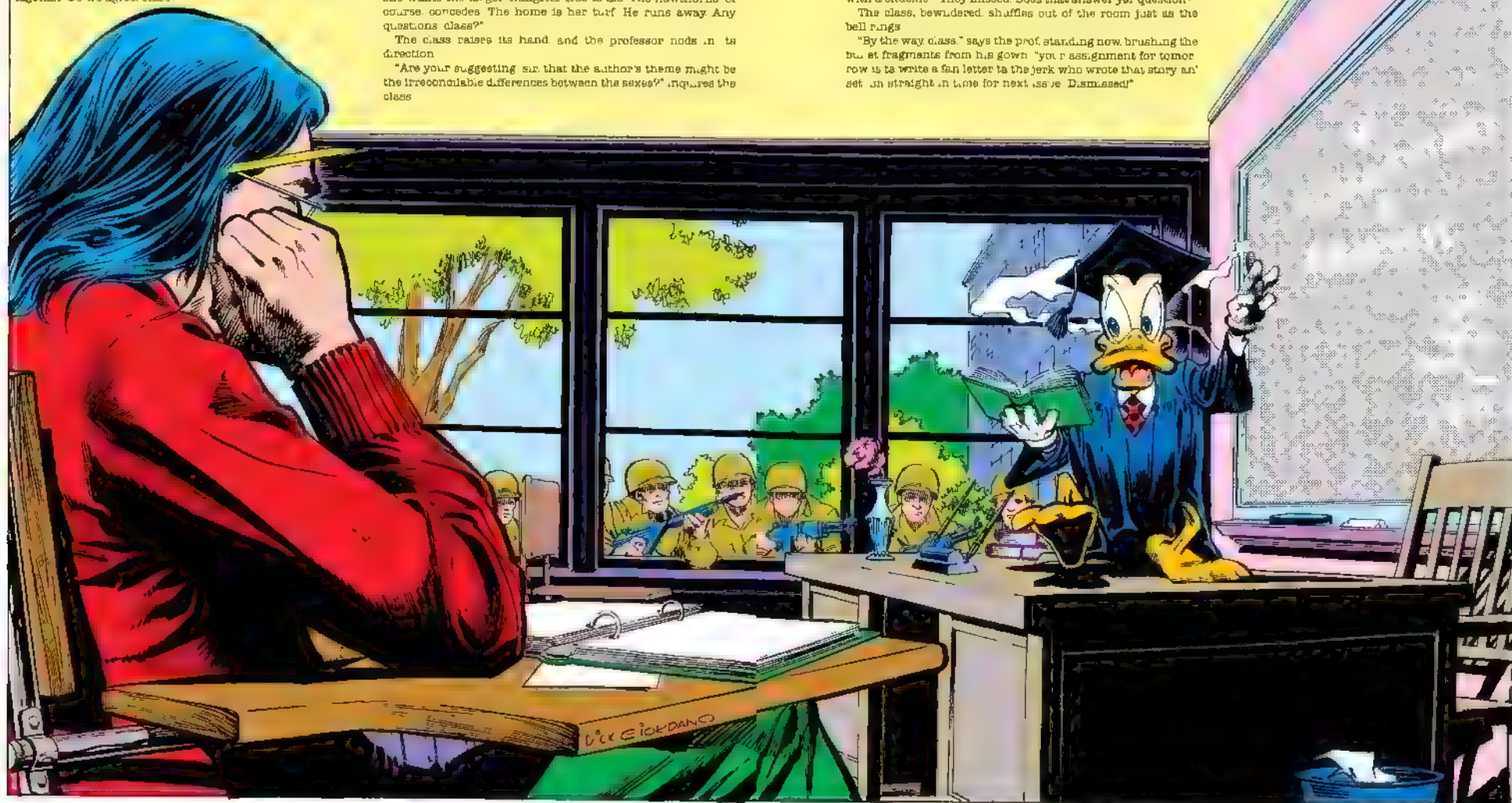
"Are you saying, Professor Howard, that one can emancipate him or herself from these constricting stationary positions?"

A shuffling sound. The professor waddles backward, hands rising instinctively to his chest. He falls forward onto the classroom floor. The class horrified springs from its seat to the professor's side.

The professor looks into the face of his class, winks, and says with a chuckle: "They missed. Does that answer your question?"

The class, bewildered, shuffles out of the room just as the bell rings.

"By the way, class," says the prof, standing now brushing the bits of fragments from his gown: "your assignment for tomorrow is to write a fan letter to the jerk who wrote that story and set an straight in time for next issue. Dismissed!"





FOR: HOWARD
THE
DUCK

VII
FAN
LETTER

Dear Steve,

Just finished reading HTD #18, and I'm afraid my reaction to your noble experiment is somewhat ambivalent. I admire your daring, your dedication, and your determination to innovate. But frankly, I don't care much for your writing. If Edison's experiments had worked out as badly as this one, I'd be penning this letter by gaslight.

Still, since I am a HOWARD THE DUCK fan, and since I realize that you'd never be insane enough to attempt this sad sort of charade again, let me enumerate some of the high points of the ish.

Above all, I enjoyed the personal touch in what I assume to be the prologue to the "story." For a change, it's welcome to learn the real circumstances, the particulars behind the euphemism "Dreaded Deadline Doom." We tend to forget that writers like yourself, Marv Wolfman, Len Wein, Doug Moench, Bill Mantlo, Chris Claremont, and the rest of the crew are human beings with finite reserves of stamina. If the other writers push themselves as hard as you do, and I know they do, my admiration for the consistent high quality of Marvel's product is trebled.

I also like Howard's evaluation of the Grand Canyon. It's hard to tell whether he was speaking sarcastically or not (his comment about processed food tends to make think he was), but his estimation of it as the "world's biggest rut" certainly startled me into rethinking my attitudes on the relationship between man and nature.

What I did not like was your self-conscious self-effacement throughout the story. Okay, so maybe you'll never grow up to be another Tom Robbins or Thomas Pynchon. Maybe you are doomed to labor as a "reactionary" writer, in the sense that your material may always consist more of invective than inventiveness. But that's no reason to see yourself as a tree that can't take root! Come on, Gerber! Get with it! How can you wallow in self-pity when HTD is premiering on the nation's newspaper pages this month, and you've finally ejected yourself from the madness of New York and found a warm, dry climate where a professional cactus has just got to grow more prickly than ever?

Back to the high points of the story. I loved the "obligatory fight scene." You've gone a long way toward removing HOWARD from the punch hit-kill syndrome, but this was the most blatant statement of your position to date. Congratulations. And when is the Las Vegas chorus girl going to get her own book?

Well, I guess that's about it for this time. Wish I could've been more laudatory, but I guess the old maxim holds true: a fill-in issue is a fill-in issue. Too bad. Anyway I'm still looking forward to the continuation of the Dr. Bong saga next ish. I understand it's dynamite.

So, 'til Howard moults, MAKE MINE MARVEL!

Steve Gerber
Las Vegas, NV 89122

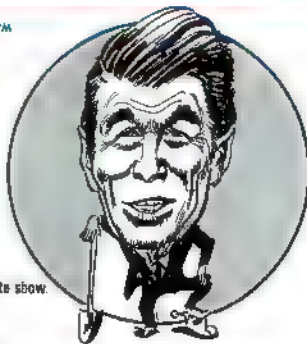


NEXT ISH: THE MAN FROM BEVERLY'S PAST! THE POWER OF THE PRESS! THE LADY DUCK WITH THE SILVER TRAY! AND MUCH, MUCH MORE AS WE REJOIN HOWARD AND BEVERLY ON THE MYSTERIOUS ISLAND OF DR. BONG. MEANTIME, JUST PRETEND THIS ISSUE NEVER HAPPENED. YOU HAD A BAD DREAM, THAT'S ALL, AND EVERYTHING'LL BE OKAY IN A SCANT THIRTY DAYS! SEE YOU THEN. :waaugh!~



Teddy Kennedy, one of the speakers,
Claims that he's not among office-seekers.
By all things 'neath the sun
Swears that he'll never run,
Yet he wears a tuxedo with sneakers!

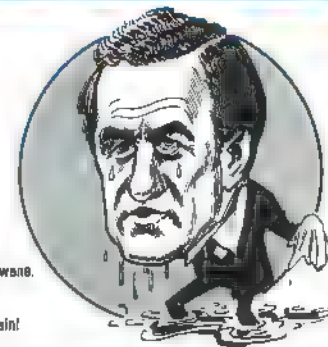
SUDEN THOUGHT ON THE ACUPUNCTURE CRAZE
WAS IT PENDING THAT CURED US OR JUST THE NEEDLES



Ronald Reagan he puts on a great show
Stepping backs, shaking hands, let's no hate show.
He's brave through thick and thin.
In the end, he does win.
I just saw it last night on "The Late Show!"



Hubert Humphrey is in a bad panic.
He's so nervous that he's nearly manic.
Wants the President's mense.
What's the odds on that chance?
Like the captain who ran the "Titanic!"



Edmund Muskie is still up in Maine
Geth'ring dust as his chances doth wane.
Ousted the top-spot for years
When he burst into tears.
Muskie suffered—but we got the pain!



George Wallace, top man in his state,
Says that he'd make a great candidate.
In or kinds of foul weather
Loves when crowds get together.
Get together—but not nigrate!



CRAZY AT 1976 PRESIDENTIAL HOPEFULS



Writer: Fred Wolfe

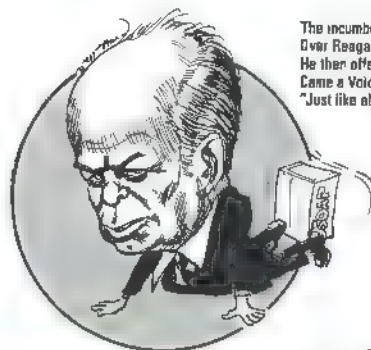
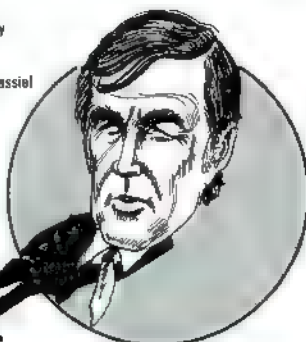


Pride of Washington: Henry "Scoop" Jackson
Wine with issues like bussin' and taxin',
Feels the Russians are links,
And the wheel-deal: it stinks.
And that Kissinger's neck needs an axin'!



From down South came this chap Jimmy Carter
In New Hampshire, looked like a top-starter
But in Boston's big race
He fell flat on his face.
Go home and pick cotton—much smarter!

Morris Udall—a candidate classy
For Environment, he comes on brassy
Thinks the voters he'll please
By protecting the trees.
He'll get only one vote—and that's Lassiel



The incumbent Republican Ford
Over Reagan he recently scored.
He then offered his prayers.
Came a Voice from "Upstairs"—
"Just like all your tasks, Gerald, I'm bored!"



The best candidate? Howard The Duck.
Marvel's hero could win with some luck.
Tho he isn't a human
It would start things a-zoomin'
If the country were run by this cluck!

ATTENTION WORD: MAKE BRUCE WALK IS NO KING KONG
TO MAKE BRUCE WALK IS NO KING KONG



HOWARD THE DUCK FOR PRESIDENT

FOOM

No 15

EXTRA-SPECIAL CAMPAIGN ISSUE

FEATURING:
AN
IN-DEPTH
INTERVIEW WITH
STEVE GERBER

MARVEL COMICS GROUP
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NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10012
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Johanna Conner
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Campaign Bulletin from Howard the Duck #4

SPECIAL BULLPEN NOTE:

Marvel Comics has never before endorsed a candidate for office, but now, in this Bicentennial bumper of a year, at this crossroads in the pathway of our nation and civilization, in this impossible era when tumult and social trauma have given way to the mire of mediocrity and monotony...well, it's time to take a stand.

For this reason, we're backing THE candidate with charisma; THE candidate who has no vested interests, owes no favors, and believes all hairless apes were created equal!

WE'RE DRAFTING HOWARD AS A CANDIDATE IN THE 1976 PRESIDENTIAL RACE!

Want to join this burgeoning grassroots movement—and cop yourself a collector's item even Wendell Willkie would be proud to own?

Well, folks, we have a limited quantity of HTD Official Campaign Buttons hot off the presses and ready to unleash upon the public! Each is illustrated in color with the leering face of America's unluckiest candidate and bears the campaign slogan: "GET DOWN, AMERICA! VOTE HOWARD THE DUCK IN '76!"

To get yours, simply mail \$1.00 (plus 25¢ for postage and handling) for each button direct to HTD's campaign manager: STEVE GERBER, % Mad Genius Associates, Room 806, 850 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10019. (And make your checks out to Mr. Gerber, okay?)

No, this is not a gag. It's a more-or-less paid political announcement. Order your button now! Today, Cleveland, tomorrow...!



Campaign Bulletin from Howard the Duck #5

HTD PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN BULLETIN!

New York, (UDI).— Though entered in none of the major primaries across the country, the Waddle (ducks don't gallop) Poll shows Howard already several percentage points ahead of President Ford and the entire field of Democratic contenders in a number of key states. The opinion of one Pernel Horowitz, an average Idaho grapefruit grower selected at random from the Boise telephone directory, seems to reflect the mood of the Nation. Mr. Horowitz states, "Shucks, we seen enuff foul play in the White House the past few years. Might as well let a fowl play around with it, an' see what he comes up with, I reckon, woo-woo."

In Washington, a noted radical expressed his approval of the Duck's candidacy, deeming him preferable to the sheep who usually seek the office.

In Honolulu, after meeting in executive session, the usually clandestine Hawaiian Revenge Squad publicly announced its endorsement of Howard. And here in New York, Chinese restaurant entrepreneurs have voted to scratch Mandarin duck from their menus in a gesture of support and respect.

Now, what about you, Mr. John Q. Public, Ms. Average Citizen, you typical American, you?! Isn't it time you joined the crusade for a cleaner, brighter America with no greasy wax build-up? Let's sweep the polls and floors together!

Order your Official HTD For President Button today, by sending \$1.00 (plus 25¢ for postage & handling) to Howard's Campaign Manager: STEVE GERBER, c/o Mad Genius Associates, Room 806, 850 Seventh Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10019. (Please make all checks payable to Mr. Gerber. Howard doesn't have a bank account. Sorry; contributions are not tax-deductable.)



GET DOWN, AMERICA!
Vote Howard the Duck in '76!

Campaign Bulletin from Howard the Duck #6

HTD CAMPAIGN BULLETIN!!

NEWS FLASH To bring you clear, concise coverage of Howard's bid for the presidency, *HOWARD THE DUCK* goes monthly as of this issue! That's right, fowl folk, HTD #7 will be on sale in just thirty days with the first installment of "The Manchurian Duck"—a tale of political intrigue with two desserts.

NEWS FLASH There's still time to latch onto your Official *HOWARD THE DUCK* For President button—but believe us, believers, they're going faster than even we ever expected! To get yours, send \$1.00 plus 25¢ for postage and handling for each button you want to Howard's Campaign Manager:

STEVE GERBER

c/o Mad Genius Associates
850 Seventh Ave., Rm. 806
New York, NY 10019

For your trouble, you'll receive a genuine brown envelope containing your massive, two-inch-diameter, full-color HTD button and an incredibly sloppy note from Steve on yucky green paper (Which reminds us: make your checks and money orders payable to Mr. Gerber.) Give a buck and back the Duck!



NEWS FLASH If you've already received your button and wouldn't mind yet another sloppy note in your mailbox, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the same New York address for news of HTD Campaign Paraphernalia To Come! (And before you ask: no, we cannot return your button in the same envelope! The "handling" part of the postage & handling charge makes it worth some political flunkin's while to stuff all those envelopes! Clear?)

GOOSE FLESH: Rumors persist of a Republican/Democratic coalition ticket as a last-ditch measure to halt the Duck's rapid rise to political superstardom. The ticket would offer Gerald Ford as candidate for president, Jimmy Carter as veep, and Ronald Reagan as a new executive branch member, "The Old Ranger."

Further bulletins as they break—or in thirty days, whichever ever comes first! Until then, remember...

GET DOWN, AMERICA!
Vote *HOWARD THE DUCK* in '76!



Isn't it time you threw your support to Howard's new species of leadership? You can show the rest of America you care by wearing (a) an oily paper suit or, preferably (b) the Official HTD Campaign Button! It's yours for just \$1.00, plus 25¢ postage and handling for each button, from Howard's campaign manager STEVE GERBER, c/o Mad Genius Associates, 850 Seventh Ave., Rm. 806, New York, N.Y. 10019 (Make all checks payable to Mr. Gerber. He plans a long vacation in South America after November 1.) More in seven days!

Weekly Campaign Update #1 from titles published the 1st week of September 1976

HOWARD THE DUCK Weekly Campaign Update #1

—Waaaugh, Mr. & Ms. America and all you folks at sea! Welcome to the first of a series of fragile reports, issued four times a month by mighty Marvel, to keep you informed of the latest developments in our wondrous waterfowl's bid for this nation's highest office. Yes, no longer content to be a big duck in a little pond, Howard is seeking the Presidency of these United States! And now from the mountains, the prairies, and the oceans white with toxic foam, here's this week's news roundup.

—According to Mike, Gene, Lon, and Don at *Apache Books* 1631 S.E. Morrison Portland, Ore 1, one of our first official HTD local campaign headquarters, the Duck's drive for write-in votes is well underway. Howard received three votes in the Oregon Primary, and at least eleven more political weary souls have pledged their ballots for the November election if the two major parties can't come up with anything more inspiring than they've shown us so far.

Back east, here at Marvel endorsements are pouring into the office every day, mostly through the ventilator shaft. Perhaps the most surprising pledge of support so far came from Fulvio deBruze, maitre d' at the Brio Coffee Shop. Fulvio intended for his pledge to pour in, but it was actually sucked in—by editor Archie Goodwin who found it with his straw in the vanilla malt he'd ordered with lunch. Arch was rushed to the nearest hospital on Smilin' Stan's personal dog sled. He's reported recovering rapidly and threatening to vote for Carter if this nonsense doesn't stop at once.

The Duck on the Issue! We asked Howard to take a stand on pollution. Here's his reply: "Stand? Every time I step outside for a trip to the cigar store, I take a walk on pollution! New York isn't an asphalt jungle anymore. Today, even the asphalt is fighting for air from beneath a carpet of broken glass and hamburger wrappers. That wouldn't be so bad except the air really isn't worth fighting for! If I'm elected, every manufacturer of no-deposit no-return bottles will take a compulsory course in advanced self-mortification and will be required by law to eat every one of those jagged shards in every gutter in America. I'll go a little easier on the hamburger magnets, though—they can get off with just wearing their oily wrappers as disposable paper suits. That's what I call recycling!"

HTD WEEKLY CAMPAIGN UPDATE #2

Unless you've dwelt in a cave for the past six months and have confined your reading strictly to rare, out-of-print editions of Lin Carter novels, you're probably aware that Marvel's feathered fury, *HOWARD THE DUCK*, has flung his battered hat into this year's presidential sweepstakes. This lemon-hued rectangle contains the second in our series of feeble reports on our wondrous waterfowl's winding woad to the White House.

—**TRAGEDY STRIKES DUCK CAMPAIGN**, Terre Haute, Ind. (I.D.) Danger has become a constant companion to presidential hopefuls, and HTD is no exception. Last week, during the course of a single 30-minute address before the Society of Landlocked Seaweed Enthusiasts here in Terre Haute, eleven separate attempts were made to snuff the Duck. Weapons ranged from a letter-bomb skimmed through the air as a paper plane to an exploding cigar with a nuclear triggering device. Ten of these assassination attempts were abortive. The eleventh—involving a bottle of Crazy Glue, a box of Wheat Thins, and an expandable watchband—irreparably scarred one Mitos Pitt, a member of the audience. Pitt, already confined to a wheelchair as a result of his participation in the Nixon campaign of '72, found himself directly in the line of fire and unable to dodge. He later commented bitterly, "Sure wish I'd been wearin' one o' them 'Git Down' buttons. Then the watchband would'a bounced right off." Shucks!



—**KRASS KOMMERCIALISM KORNER**: Yes, you can still attach yourself or your clothing to the Official HTD For President Button pictured above. The price is \$1.00 plus 25¢ postage and handling per button.

—**KRASS KOMMERCIALISM KORNER, Part Two**: If even the button is insufficient to express your fowl ardor, may we recommend our new HTD CAMPAIGN PORTRAIT, produced in association with Magic Mountain Books? Classier than a poster, it's reproduced in subtle sepia on heavy stock, suitable for framing. It, too, is just a buck, plus that inevitable 25¢ for postage and handling. And both the button and portrait are available from Howard's campaign manager.

STEVE GERBER

c/o Mad Genius Associates
850 Seventh Avenue, Rm. 806
New York, NY 10019

(Make all checks payable to Steve; he's still saving up for a copy of HTD #1.) Another report in seven days.

Weekly Campaign Updates #2-4 from titles published the 1st week of September 1976

HTD WEEKLY CAMPAIGN UPDATE #3

With the autumn equinox now upon us, the campaign trail is beginning to feel the impact of the bombastic bird's web-shedden foot. Reports of growing support arrive daily at *HOWARD THE DUCK CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS*. From DeFunak Springs, Florida comes word of a touching personal campaign sacrifice. Mr. and Mrs. R. Walter Sandoz, a local retired couple living on a fixed income, have vowed to live on a diet of grubs, tadpoles, and assorted grubs and seeds until election day as a show of support for the Duck. "Heck fire, a body can't afford to eat like a man with today's prices," claims Mr. Sandoz. "Might as well eat like a duck! A ter all, if it's good enough for a presidential candidate, I figure it's good enough for us."



CAMPAIGN MEMORABILIA CLASSICS: Yes, once election day is past, and the Duck makes his way to that little summer house on the Potomac, you can be proud that you purchased the Official HTD For President Button. What? You haven't yet? Well then hurry up and send \$1.00 plus 25¢ for postage and handling for your button. You'll be showing your support for the fabulous fowl, and you'll be leaving a precious legacy for your children. (No kidding! Do you know how much McGovern-Eagleton buttons are worth?) And if the button doesn't satisfy your ducky determination enough, then send for our new HTD CAMPAIGN PORTRAIT produced in association with Magic Mountain Books. Eminently suitable for framing, it also retails for just a buck, plus the usual 25¢ for postage and handling. For your button and/or portrait, make your check payable to Howard's campaign manager.

STEVE GERBER

c/o Mad Genius Associates
850 Seventh Avenue, Rm. 806
New York, NY 10019

And who knows maybe Steve will send you a picture postcard from Buenos Aires! More in seven days!

HOWARD THE DUCK CAMPAIGN UPDATE FINAL: Time is short, and so is our space. There's just enough room allotted us for this item:

—**DUCK SUPPORT SWEEPS COUNTRY!** Pina Town, New Mexico (JDI) City Father Harley D. Farnsworth last week declared his full support of the Duck. Speaking before a gathering of the West Central New Mexico Chapter of the Sons of the Sagebrush, Mr. Farnsworth said, "It's about time that this country had a candidate that truly respects the public. There's not a man among us that Howard wouldn't look up to. I say let's put him on a pedestal, and look up to him for a change!"

—For further news on the campaign, on the Official HTD Button and related paraphernalia, be sure to catch the next *HOWARD THE DUCK* letters page. And don't forget to vote!

WISE QUACKS

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP, 575 MADISON AVE. N.Y.C. 10022

HTD CAMPAIGN UPDATE SPECIAL EXPANDED EDITION

Greetings, Mr. and Ms. America and all you folks at sea. There's good news tonight. But not much. And mostly it concerns the candidacy of Marvel's feathered fury, HOWARD THE DUCK. Now that you've read the story of how he won the All-Night Party's nomination (which actually happened back in August, but comics unfortunately work on a two-month tape delay) here are the latest-breaking developments in Howard's harrowing political career.

—DUCK BREAKS DEVELOPMENT IN NEW YORK New York (JD) In a highly unorthodox demonstration of his antipathy toward shoddy, colorless urban redevelopment, All-Night Party candidate Howard the Duck took a vicious swipe at a new high-rise apartment project on the lower east side. The project collapsed. The swipe was taken with a baseball bat and his girder on what was to be the ground floor of the structure. Project designer Nils Harbinger was quoted as commenting, "Aw, shucks on ducks!" The city housing administration is investigating the disaster and, according to one unofficial spokesman, hopes to "find room in our tight budget for a bottle of Crazy Glue to help patch things up." To which Howard rejoined, simply, "Waaaaagh. What's the use?"

—DUCK OPPOSES CONSTRUCTION OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANT Fleasville, Ark. (JD) "We're true ecologists and humanitarians," said engineer Hubert Dunge of his company's proposed plan for energy expansion coupled with population control. "You're sick, replied candidate Duck. And for days the debate raged here in Fleasville over the building a nuclear reactor adjacent to the playground of Our Lady of Unremitting Sorrows and Vicissitudes Elementary School. "It's perfectly safe," Dunge repeatedly maintained redundantly over and over again. "Why, I'd sleep like a baby at night even if it were built in my backyard." When HTD and a member of the Fleasville City Council offered to sponsor a rezoning measure that would in fact have allowed the reactor's construction on precisely that site, Dunge reneged. "It's perfectly safe, but the noise, or further consideration, would keep me awake at night," he admitted. It was later discovered by private detectives that Dunge was expelled from Our Lady in 1947 for making obscene gestures at his hot lunch. He's craved revenge ever since. Shamelessly, he acknowledged the truth of the report before a group of outraged parents. "It's true," he said, "but only perfectly safe revenge." The City Council took pity on the long-tortured soul and granted permission for construction of the reactor. To which Howard replied, simply "Waaaaagh. What's the use?"

—THE DUCK ON THE ISSUES! We asked Howard what he would do, if elected, to solve the problem of unemployment. He replied: "You want the plain, unvarnished truth? The unemployed in this country are just plain lazy — and respect them for it! It takes guts to resist the societal pressure to entrap oneself in a meaningless, boring, socially-unproductive nine-to-five automation existence. Especially in this world, where the first question everybody's conditioned to ask is, 'What do you do?' The problem isn't unemployment — it's how to provide you, hairless apes with a more convincing rationale for spending half your waking lives battling tedium just to make somebody else rich. Personally, I hope we never succeed in formulating that nifty nugget of persuasion."

—THE DUCK ON THE ISSUES: SHORT TAKES! Fearlessly sticking his beak where other candidates fear to snap, the Duck has made these biting comments. On the reunion of the Beatles: "... say fiddle-faddle to the critics who think the four mop-tops can never live up to their public's expectations. It's an artist's duty to extend his audience's expectations, not merely fulfill them." On the Middle East: "I think the U.S. and the Soviet Union should arm both sides with water pistols and let 'em squirt each other to death with oil. As for these hijackings, they've got to stop. Not only are people getting killed, nobody gets to see the end of their in-flight movie anymore." On Crime in the Streets: "... in favor of licensing muggers, pushers, and all criminals and taxing their profits. Why should the poor middle-class slob be taxed for what's lifted from his pocket?" On the Ultimate Future of Humanity: "Waaaaagh. What's the use?"

—CAMPAIGN FUNDING DEPT. A limited number (roughly equivalent to the annual yield of peanuts in Plains, Ga.) of Official HTD Campaign Buttons is still available. Wearing this button will (a) show your support for HTD to the vast majority of Americans who only look at the pictures; (b) get you on half-a-dozen government Enemies Lists; (c), probably improve your love life, but the test results aren't final yet. The button is red, white, blue, and duck-colored, and measures two inches in every direction except thick. You can obtain yours by mailing \$.00, plus 25¢ for postage and handling per button to the address below.

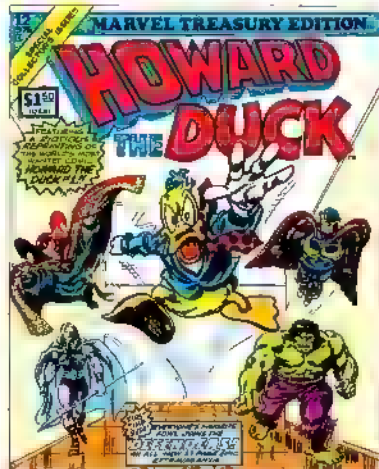


—CAMPAIGN FUNDING DEPT. Part Two: And here's another fine feathered collector's item for you produced in association with Magic Mountain Books: The Official HTD Campaign Portrait printed in warm, comforting sepia tones on heavy 8 x 10" stock suitable for framing. No patriot's bedroom wall's complete without one. It, too, is just \$1.00, plus the inevitable 25¢ per for postage and handling. And you can get it (and/or the button) by writing to Howard's Campaign Manager.

STEVE GERBER
c/o Mad Genius Associates
850 Seventh Avenue Rm. 806
New York, NY 10019

(Please make all checks payable to Steve. Otherwise he'll be unable to afford that ambassadorship to Rhode Island when Howard wins.)

—NEXT ISSUE The Nation jumps aboard the HTD Bandwagon, cause it's playing our song. Did you know Benjamin Franklin wanted our national bird to be the turkey? See you in thirty days, indigenous ones.



HTD PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE FINAL
News Flash: DUCK FEVER SWEEPS NATION, MASS IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM PROPOSED Washington, D.C. (UD1)
Fench Q.T. Hargrove, vice-deputy assistant undersecretary of the Food and Drug Administration, announced today that the FDA would undertake a nationwide inoculation program to halt the epidemic spread of "duck fever." The malady, also known as "Howard's Disease," infects the brains of voters and painfully heightens their sensitivity to absurd political rhetoric. As a result, the spokesman said, "Voters are turning away from Jimmy Carter and President Ford in droves. The disease represents a clear and present danger to the complacent existence of our two-party system. The FDA suspects the disease may be of extraterrestrial origin. Federal microbe hunters are furiously seeking to isolate the virus and destroy it utterly by November 2nd."

News Flash: DUCK PADDLES AHEAD IN STRAW VOTE New York (UD1) Although Ford and Carter have made significant gains since the start of the campaign—almost all registered Democrats now favor Carter and three of the four registered Republicans have pledged their support to Ford—HTD has retained his hold on the independent vote. The Waddle Poll therefore expects Howard to carry 49 states; the exception is Wyoming, where there are so few people that chickens are allowed to vote. "Only half the population eligible to vote bothers to register," the Waddle report read, "and the established parties comprise barely half of those registered. So we have a situation where 25% of the electorate selects the candidates between which the full 100% are expected compliantly to choose. Voters now seem to comprehend that this is ridiculous and are flocking to Howard as an alternative to a bizarre form of oligarchy."

The Waddle Organization cautions, however, that its poll was conducted before the Bathrub Scandal came to public attention. How will this incident affect the Duck's chances? The reporter soberly concludes: "Gee whiz, anything could happen now! Gouy!!"

News Flash: DUCK CAMPAIGN TREASURY AT ALL-TIME LOW; CAMPAIGN MANAGER EMBEZZLING FUNDS, CLAIMS HTD New York (UD1)—Howard the Duck today accused his campaign manager, Stephen R. Gerber, of embezzling funds from the sale of Official HTD FOR PRESIDENT BUTTONS and CAMPAIGN PORTRAITS of the Duck. Gerber claims that the buttons—resplendent in four-colors, two inches in diameter, and resplendent of printer's ink—were his property as well as the 8x10 sepia-toned portraits, produced in association with Magic Mountain Books. When pressed to substantiate this claim, Gerber angrily sputtered, "Besides, that via on the Riviera was too big a bargain to pass up." Asked if these campaign items were still available to the general public, Gerber seemed to relax somewhat and replied, "You betcha. And they're just \$1.00 each, plus 25¢ postage and handling per item from me."

STEVE GERBER
c/o Mad Genius Associates
850 Seventh Avenue Room 806
New York, NY 10019

But hurry if ya want 'em before election day. And supplies are running out fast!"

Speaking of running out, this reporter later learned that Gerber had purchased either a one-way ticket to the south of France or a Greyhound See-America pass from a scalper outside the McCartney and Wings concert at Madison Square Garden last summer. Draw your own inevitable conclusions.



GET DOWN AMERICA!
Vote HOWARD THE DUCK in '76!

Campaign Bulletin from Howard the Duck #9

HTD PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN ROUNDUP: It was a good fight, ma. Unfortunately, they creamed us. But it was a battle to remember...which is why we're hard at work even now preparing a special sort of *souvenir* of the campaign. You'll be hearing more about it in the next month or so. Meanwhile, we still have a few OFFICIAL HTD FOR PRESIDENT BUTTONS left and we figured we'd offer 'em up once more, just as a sentimental gesture, before they become overpriced collector's items. You can still get yours for just \$1.00, plus 25¢ per button for postage and handling. Likewise, the HTD CAMPAIGN PORTRAIT is still available. Same price. Same address: STEVE GERBER, c/o Mad Genius Associates, 850 Seventh Avenue, Room 806, New York, NY 10019. And that's all the pep talk for this issue. Frankly, we're poor losers and since we can't say anything nice about the other candidates, we'll just clam up. Nuts to you. Grumble, grumble, gnash, gnash, waaaaagh.

WEAR HOWARD!
AT LAST YOUR OFFICIAL DUCK SHIRT!

YOURS FOR ONLY \$3.99
IN KID SIZE AND \$4.99 IN ADULT SIZE PLUS 50¢ POSTAGE & HANDLING FOR EACH SHIRT!

SEND TO:

SUPERHERO MERCHANDISE
P.O. BOX 777
DOVER, NEW JERSEY 07801
DEPT. HD

SEND ME _____ SHIRTS SIZE _____ KIDS \$4.99 (9-12) \$4.99 (13-14) \$4.99 (15-16) \$4.99 (17-18) \$4.99 (19-24)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

ALLOW 4 WEEKS FOR DELIVERY. U.S. FUNDS. CANADIAN CADDIES ADD 50¢.

KNOW YOUR CANDIDATE!



Continued on page 12
 Not then when A...
 As... TEVECE 8/76

STEVE GERBER. Once they've read this *Marvel Treasury Edition*, Howard, your fans and potential supporters should be fairly conversant with the history of your exploits. But today's voter is interested in more than a candidate's record.

HOWARD THE DUCK: Yeah. I know. They want all the intimate details of the person's life. What-daya think—I've never read *Celebrity* magazine?

SG: Skip the sarcasm, okay? And let's take this opportunity to let the voters get to know you as a person.

HTD: But I'm not a person, you yo-yo! I'm a duck!

SG: Whatever. Let's start with a simple question that should lend some insight into your persona—into the real you, that is. Why do you want to be president?

HTD: All the standard reasons. Your power. Your fame. Your niche in history. But mostly it's the salary. See, I'm currently unemployed, and 200 grand a year would fill the void nicely. Especially with four years' free rent tossed in to sweeten the deal.

SG: Practical, material considerations are your primary motivation, then. Would that same orientation be reflected in a Duck Administration as well? Would you govern the country pragmatically?

HTD: Shucks, no. Deep down, I'm a cockeyed optimist. I took a course in motel management once. I'd run the country that way—like everybody's name was Smith.

SG: Could you be more specific?

HTD: No.

SG: Oh. Well, then, let's talk about your qualifications for office. What's the extent of your political experience?

HTD: I used to work in a loan company branch office.

SG: Apparently that's meant to imply something, but—

HTD: I sold used cars for a while, too.

SG: That's quite an impressive resume, but we seem to be digressing.

HTD: I distinctly heard you say you wanted to probe the *real me*. Well, that's it. Basically, I'm just as dull as the next nine-to-five automaton. You gotta remember back where I come from, bein' a duck is nothin' exceptional.

SG: Yes, but even so, I can't picture a fellow with your sardonic bent plodding away at a workaday job.

HTD: How true, how true. I never kept one job more than three or a half weeks. Which is another advantage of the presidency. They can only fire ya for high crimes or misdemeanors. That stuff I don't pull. I just mouth off a lot.

SG: Maybe we'd better steer this discussion toward your positions on the issues.

HTD: Yeah. Let's.

SG: You've expressed dismay at certain trends in popular culture, particularly the glorification of the rogue and the glamorization of violence. Are we to infer from this that you'd advocate some form of media censorship?

HTD: You gotta be kidding! Ya don't eliminate garbage by turnin' it into a black market commodity, an' ya don't elevate tastes by gagging writers an' artists. Look, there's nothin' wrong with makin' heroes outta non-conformists. I'll even admit to a rebellious streak myself. It's just—at the risk of soundin' pompous—what seems to distinguish today's anti-hero from yesterday's is the former's willingness to callously exploit other people to achieve his own independence from the system. It's the difference between a poet an' a vulture, basically.

SG: That's pretty heavy.

HTD: Yeah. Nearly collapsed under its own weight, didn't it?

SG: I mean, do you think the American public is ready for that degree of subtle reasoning from its president?

HTD: They better be. If you turkeys can't even think that deep, this nation's had it!

SG: We seem to be gingerly approaching the core of your political philosophy, Howard. You want human beings to *think*.

HTD: Yeah, well, I know it's askin' a lot from a hairless ape, but...

SG: Realistically, how do you assess your chances for winning the November election?

HTD: Chance, schmance. I'm no gambler. Barring unforeseen factors, it's in the bag.

SG: And should some such factor arise...?

HTD: I wish ya luck unloadin' those "Get Down America" buttons, pa.

SG: Thank you, Howard the Duck.

HTD: You're welcome, Steve the Teddybear. Now gwan—beat it!



UNSOLICITED TESTIMONIALS

A glittering gallery of Marvel Super-stars explain in their own words why HOWARD THE DUCK gets their votes in 1976.



CAPTAIN AMERICA: "Oh, sure, he's honest. He's canny. He's in the best tradition of rugged American individualism. But the real reason I'm voting for HTD is not once in his entire campaign has he stooped to invoking the Bicentennial! I don't know about you folks, but I'm sick of hearing about it, and I appreciate Howard's thoughtfulness."



IRON MAN: "He's got a heart of gold and nerves of steel. And he promised Tony Stark that my armor would be tax-deductible as a business expense. He's elected."



BENJAMIN J. GRIMM (a.k.a. The THING): "He smokes a mean sledge. That's good enough for me! Go clobber 'em, leather-puss!"



THE MIGHTY THOR: "When thou lookest upon yon slate of candidates, then wilt thou see with eyes moistened by sorrow, that thou truly hast no choice."



THE INCREDIBLE HULK: "Hulk likes little duck! Duck is Hulk's friend! Vote for duck or Hulk will smash your face!"



DR. STEPHEN STRANGE: "If politics be the art of the possible," then praise the Vishanti we have a candidate who has seen the worlds within worlds and knows for certain—all things are possible."



DAREDEVIL: "My super-hearing has been attuned to his heartbeat from the start of the campaign, so I can guarantee he'll never lie to you."



LUKE CAGE, POWER MAN: "Listen, I work for a livin', see, so I'm runnin' with the candidate who's gonna help teacher my nesi! Mr. H.T. Duck, not some jive turkey, you dig?"



STAN LEE: "I graciously bowed out of the presidential race this year, so besides Howard, who's left, true believe?"



YOU, MARVELITE: It's not enough that Howard has the support of these far-famed fighters for truth and justice folks. He needs your backing, too! That's why we're making this last, unbearably pathetic appeal not only for your vote—but your hard-earned bread as well.

The OFFICIAL HTD FOR PRESIDENT CAMPAIGN BUTTON pictured atop this page is still available. It's printed in full color, measures two (count 'em, two!) inches in diameter, and comes complete with its own pin! What's more, it looks even better decorating your body than it does on this page—that's a campaign promise!

To order yours, rush \$1.00, plus 25¢ for postage and handling per button, to Howard's Campaign Manager.

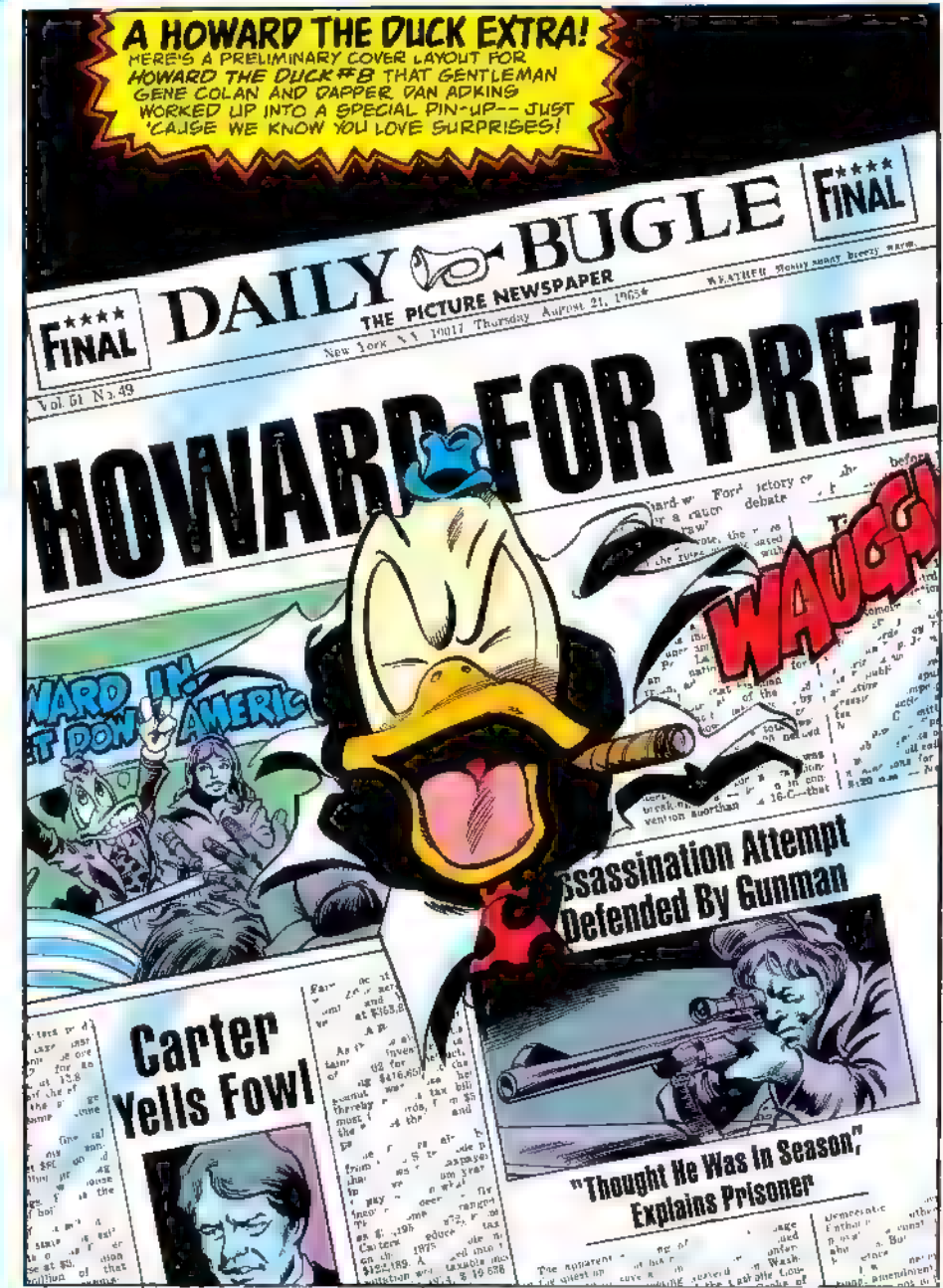
STEVE GERBER
 c/o Mad Genius Associates
 850 Seventh Ave., Rm. 806
 New York, NY 10019

We should also mention that the OFFICIAL HTD CAMPAIGN PORTRAIT—an 8 x 10 sepia-tone poster printed on heavy stock and suitable for framing—is available from the same hungry writer at the same address for the same price: \$1.00, plus 25¢ postage and handling per portrait. And it's a beauty.

Which leaves but one thing left to be said:

★ GET DOWN, ★
 AMERICA! ★

Vote HOWARD THE DUCK in 1976!



THE WAY IT ALL BEGAN!

WITH TYPICALLY ANTHROPOMORPHIC DISREGARD FOR MY PERSONAL SAFETY AND FOR THE STATE OF EXHAUSTION SO CLEARLY DELINEATED ON MY FACE--

-- GERBER, MAYERIK, AND MARVEL COMICS TRANSPORTED ME BY MEANS UNKNOWN BACK HERE TO THE FLORIDA EVERGLADES, WHERE I FIRST APPEARED ON YOUR STUPID EARTH.

I'M SUPPOSED TO BARE MY SOUL AND CONFESS ALL I KNOW ABOUT THAT RIDICULOUS INCIDENT. UNFORTUNATELY, I REFUSE.

NOT ONE PEEP-- LET ALONE A "WAAAUGH"--TILL I GET CARFARE HOME!



Alternate versions of Marvel Treasury Edition's 12-page Duck

VOICE FROM ON HIGH: All right, Howard, cut the whining and get on with the synopsis! You have our complete assurance--

HOWARD THE DUCK: Fine on your assurance. You figure I'm gonna settle for a verbal commitment from some disinterested entity I can't even shake hands with? Get off!

VFOH: All right, if that's the way you want it. But it's the readers who'll suffer, Howard, not we. We published the story. We know it by rote.

HTD: Tryin' to play on my sympathies, huh? Well, forget it! I'm no bleedin' heart. Either cough up the cold, hard cash or keep mum, see?

VFOH: Whatever you say. We can't force you to talk. So we'll simply have to narrate the story ourselves. (ahem) As a result of this Duck's flagrant stupidity, the world almost came to an end when--

HTD: Waitamin'. I was a vict m, not

VFOH: Oh? Really? Well, according to our records it was all your fault.

HTD: That's a lie. There was this wacko from another dimension who called himself the "Overmaster" see? An' by joggin' the cosmic axis around, he caused various planes of reality alternate universes, to meet tangentially. And every time any two o' those worlds touched, see, somebody'd blink out of his own reality and into another! That's what happened to Korrek, my balmy barbarian buddy--he blinked outta his home world o' Kasharta and landed in a jar of peanut butter on earth!

VFOH: Of course. And that's also what befell Jennifer Kale and Dakimh the Enchanter and Man-Thing. Well, that's the story, folks--

HTD: No! No. NO NO!! Cripes, Jennifer was an earth-kid who had a sorta natural aptitude for magic. So Dakimh took her o' his word as his apprentice, to help 'im untangle all these jumbled realities. Man-Thing, well-- he lived. I ya can call that livin' in the Everglades which just happened to be the nexus point of all realities. Got that? Yeah!

VFOH: Mmm. Then Man-Thing, obviously, was the organizer of the Congress of Realities mentioned in the story, so--

HTD: You sure you published this story? Listen, pal, the villain of the piece was that "Overmaster" character who turned out to be *They the Weather-Spinner*, ruler of Sominus, which roughly corresponds to Hell--or maybe New York City in this here cosmology. Clear?

VFOH: Clear. So we're joining the story in progress, right? At the moment just before you made your famous entrance.

HTD: Right! For once. Now, any more brilliant questions?

VFOH: Just one. How are you getting home?

HTD: Waaaugh.





STEVE GERBER

How does a man end up writing dialog for a duck?

Steve Gerber claims that Howard was an accident that the Man-Thing story he first appeared in demanded such a character: a topper as it were to the insanity that preceded it. We know better. We know that Steve Gerber is not a diligent prole.

He is mad. Total v

He's paranoid. He won't go into a trance unless he's sure nobody's waiting for him there.

And he's undoubtedly one of the more talented writers ever to hit the Marvel Comics scene.

But how do we get that way?

Let's see. He tells us his worst ob ever was as a salesman in a used car lot in St. Louis when he was 22. See, Steve was too honest. He couldn't tie to any prospect was customer and he sure couldn't sell those junkers via the truth. So he was fired by the owner of the lot. His wife left (And Steve didn't blame her a bit) He and his family nearly starved to death in the weeks that followed. They were living on food stamps and had no hope at all. For the next couple weeks, they were in a state of passive panic. Passive because they had to conserve their energy. Finally, Steve got a job on a radio station.

Eventually, he got trapped in an agency suffocating as he did commerce as for a savings and loan company, not the particularly bad

day he wrote Ray Thomas a friend of some ten years and said "I am an old friend and you must help me I am dying." Six months later Steve was at Marvel.

Then you have it: a typical American success story.

Steve now has 1 wife (Margo whom he met while teaching Communication at which have since forgotten how to do - at St. Louis J. 1 daughter (3 year old Samantha) 2 dogs (Apple and Wavy, and 3 cats (Stupid, Stricken and Kitten). He's currently interested in writing films and has made several films on his own.

The above paragraph sounds like something from *Sixteen*.

And it still doesn't nor do any of the previous paragraphs, except now Steve Gertler ended up as

a dog writer for a duck

one of America's most prolific writers of morality plays twirls a walking pie of muck as the star, for crying out loud.

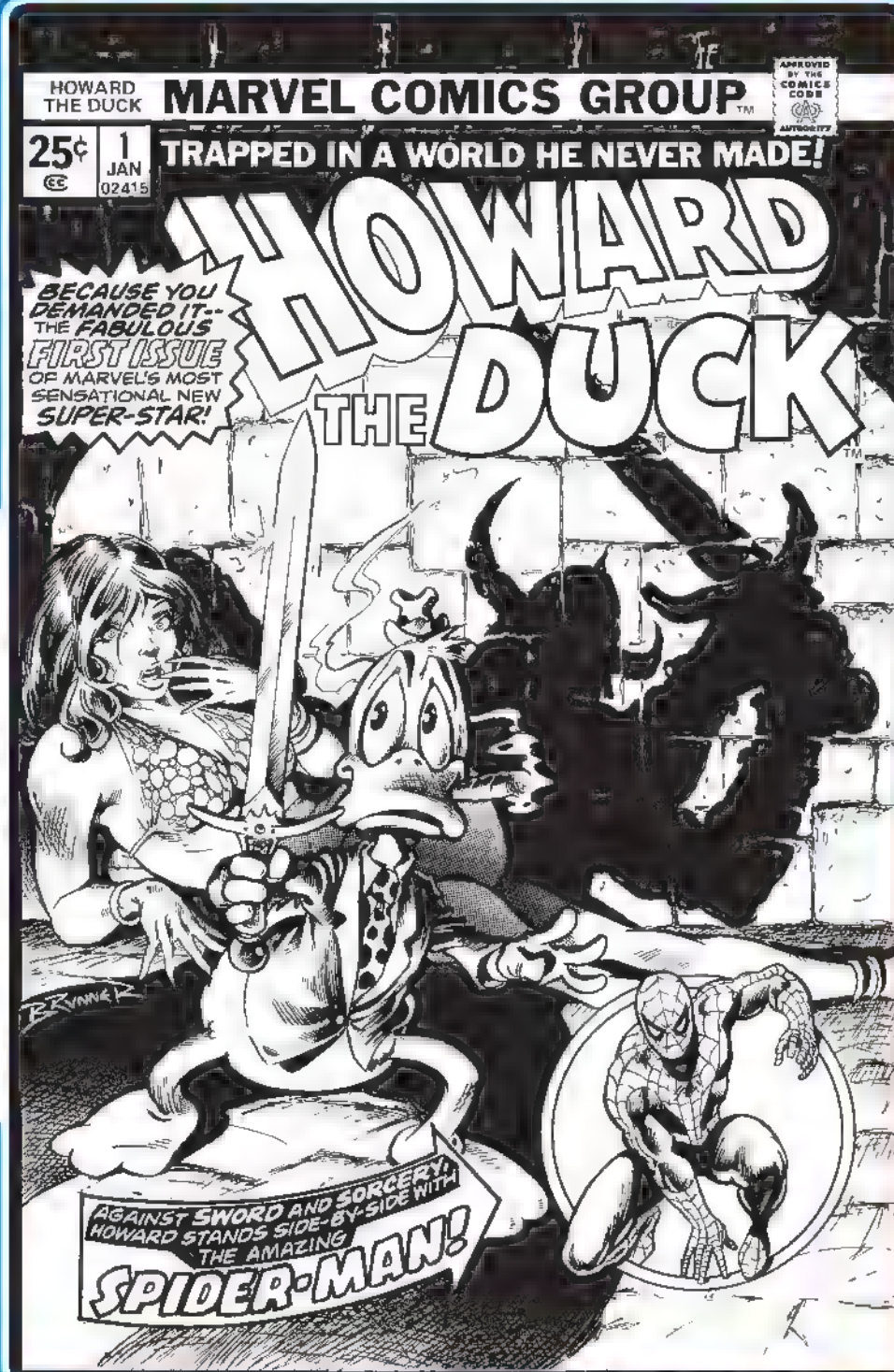
and one of the widest harmonists we've ever seen.

Except that we can't ask for explicit answers

It's enough that he make the change at the seasons is always there at the right time

Okay Steve. We practice y defined you. Now
will you let Tony's mother go.

We told you the way was



[illegible]

THE BUNNY

1. **WHEW! LEAVING BEHIND LIKE BASIC TRAINING FOR THE 100-POUND GOOD THINGNESS!**

2. **HAI-SEE-TOO!**

3. **IS THAT HAIR THERE? NOT ONLY CAN WE APPEAR AN' INDEE YOU CAN...**

4. **YOU'RE A PUNCH-A-PUNCH BUCKET!**

5. **WHAAM!**

6. **HAIR ROOM! NO BLOOD FOR THIS INDIVIDUAL!**

7. **YOU MISERABLE PRESENT PRESENT PRESENT! IT IS A SITUATION OF EXTREMITY! AND SEE IT TO YOUR FURIOUS FURY!**

8. **YOU HAVE THE POWERS OF A GOD! SO HAVE SOME OF THEM!**

9. **WHEW! A GOOD HEAL - I'M BEE HIVE!**

10. **YOU KNOW, YOU KNOW! YOU KNOW! YOU KNOW! YOU KNOW! YOU KNOW!**

11. **YOU DON'T GET AWAY FROM ME!**

12. **YOU DON'T GET AWAY FROM ME! YOU DON'T GET AWAY FROM ME! YOU DON'T GET AWAY FROM ME!**

MICHAEL CHABON

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

Panel 1: BART: Y'KNOCK OUT BART IN THE BROOMS. HE'S NOT HERE TO SCARE ANYONE!

Panel 2: HE SAYS THAT'S A NOISE HEARD IN THE JURY THAT BART'S CLOSER TO BEING A DOLLAR BILL.

Panel 3: THEN USE YOUR MIND'S EYE TO SEE THE TREE!

Panel 4: AS THE TRIP IN THE TRIP, HE MOVES...

Panel 5: KAHN BLOOM FORCES TO BE THE JURY OF AN ENTERTAINMENT ALL ABOUT THE "NO" AND "THAT'S" POWER.

Panel 6: "THEY'RE IN THE JURY OF AN ENTERTAINMENT ALL ABOUT THE "NO" AND "THAT'S" POWER."

Panel 7: "THEY'RE IN THE JURY OF AN ENTERTAINMENT ALL ABOUT THE "NO" AND "THAT'S" POWER."

Panel 8: "THEY'RE IN THE JURY OF AN ENTERTAINMENT ALL ABOUT THE "NO" AND "THAT'S" POWER."

Panel 9: "THEY'RE IN THE JURY OF AN ENTERTAINMENT ALL ABOUT THE "NO" AND "THAT'S" POWER."

Panel 10: "THEY'RE IN THE JURY OF AN ENTERTAINMENT ALL ABOUT THE "NO" AND "THAT'S" POWER."

Panel 11: "THEY'RE IN THE JURY OF AN ENTERTAINMENT ALL ABOUT THE "NO" AND "THAT'S" POWER."

Panel 12: "THEY'RE IN THE JURY OF AN ENTERTAINMENT ALL ABOUT THE "NO" AND "THAT'S" POWER."

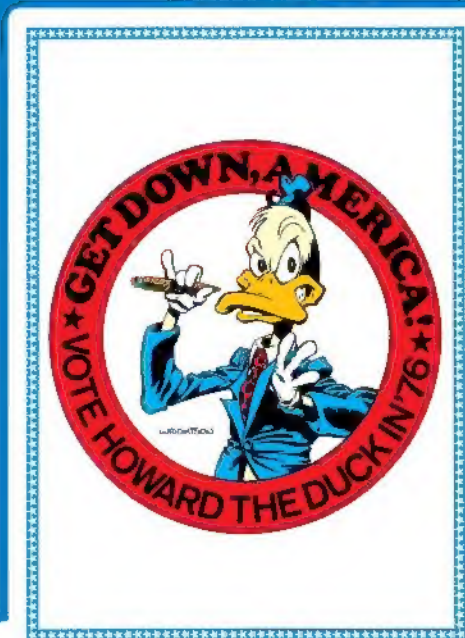
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Howard the Duck #1, page 15
color guide by Frank Brunner



Images courtesy of HeritageAuctions.com

1976 campaign button art
by Bernie Wrightson



The 1996 Spider-Man: Strange Adventures TPB
reprinted Howard the Duck #1. Cover art by Steve Lightle.



Essential Man-Thing Vol. 1 TPB
cover art by Frank Brunner & Tom Smith

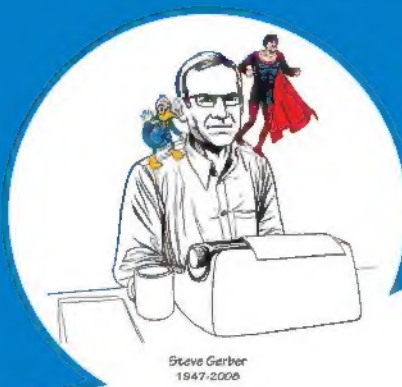


Essential Man-Thing Vol. 2 TPB
back-cover art by Frank Brunner
& Avalon's Matt Milla



Getting Down Again

Afterword by Steve Gerber from the introduction
to the 2008 *Howard the Duck Omnibus Hardcover*



He was in a Pretenders song ("Precious") and got coverage in the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, and *New York Magazine*. For a year or so, he had his own newspaper comic strip. In 1976, he ran for president, and ten years later he became the first Marvel Comics character to star in a major motion picture. Between his presidential bid and the catastrophe of his big screen debut, he was the bone of contention in a bitter and much-publicized lawsuit that helped reshape the way business was conducted between comic book creators and their publishers.

He was more than that to me, though. He was my voice—my alter ego, really. He was the conduit for my political views, my wacky sociological theories, my outrage at society's ills, and my all-too-frequent confusion about the intricacies of personal relationships.

In every respect—even his name, which he owes to one Howard Tockman, my best friend in high school—Howard the Duck was that rarest of birds among mainstream comics: a personal creation.

Today, of course, it's common, even expected, for writers and artists to offer their individual "takes" on a character. It's not even unusual for multiple versions of a single character to be published concurrently. So what's the big deal anymore about a personal duck?

Howard was precisely the opposite of a character that could be freely reinterpreted by other writers. I used to joke that the only way anyone else could write him authentically would be to live inside my mind for awhile, and that that was too much to ask of any rational human being. Others could try to put their words and worldviews into the duck's beak, but the result would come off not as a re-imagining of the character but more like a standup comic's impersonation—Rich Little "doing" Johnny Carson.

Okay, fine, but why does that matter? We're still talking about a damn cartoon duck.

Except we're not. We're talking about the importance—in this case, I'd go so far as to say "necessity"—of an individual creative voice and an individual point of view in an entertainment universe consisting largely of Ultra-Mega-Mass-Pacification-Product.

Howard railed against kung fu revenge films at the height of their popularity. Howard made merciless fun of bogus cult leaders and their doe-eyed followers. Howard ridiculed the bodice-ripping romance novel fad when publishers everywhere were attempting to imitate it. In America's Bicentennial Year, Howard took the political parties, their cookie-cutter candidates, the media, and

willfully ignorant voters to task for the way our leaders were chosen.

As a minority of one sentient waterfowl in a world of "hairless apes"—his term for humans—he challenged intolerance on every front, merrily upending hypocritical crusaders for "decency," anti-gay bigots, racial (and species) prejudice, and opposing the great lumbering force that is conformity itself. He made mockery of the corporate mindset; battled "Konglomerate," the rampaging 800-pound big business gorilla; and made one of the earliest pop culture statements against movie marketing run amok.

And if you think any of that is the least bit remarkable, consider the following:

Marvel Comics knew this subversive literature was being published between the covers of one of their comic books and allowed it to happen.

Thirty-odd years later, I still can't quite explain that.

Maybe it was inevitable that "creative differences" and business issues would eventually bring an end to Howard's early glory days. The 1970s were waning, and the more conservative Reagan era was on the horizon. Publishers and readers alike became averse to experimentation, preferring more direct storylines with simpler motivations and unambiguous heroes and villains. It was a tough time in America for a duck, or anyone, with a mind of his own.

But I prefer not to dwell on those times. Far more important is the fact that the pages that comprise this volume exist, that they remain as relevant as ever, and that Marvel is willing to publish them yet again.

Some thanks are due to the other people responsible for the content of this Omnibus.

Former Editor in Chief Roy Thomas hired me to work at Marvel, assigned me the Man-Thing series in which Howard first appeared, and allowed me to steer it in whatever bizarre direction my imagination led. Roy also gave the green light to proceed with "Frog Death," the first Howard the Duck solo story.

Former Marvel publisher Stan Lee said, "Yes!" instantly, when I proposed Howard the Duck as a standalone title.

Artists Val Mayerik, Frank Brunner, John Buscema, Sal Buscema, Carmine Infantino, Will Meugniot, Steve Leialoha, Klaus Janson, and, most especially, Gene Colan brought Howard's adventures to vibrant visual life.

Mary Skrenes suggested the name "Beverly" for Howard's human companion, contributed creatively to any number of the stories in this book, and weathered the turmoil that was my life for as long as she could. Mary and I still collaborate from time to time and, over the years, she has remained my closest friend. I dedicate this book to her.

Finally, I'd like to express my sincerest gratitude to the current management and staff of Marvel for bringing this volume to press and to collection editor Mark Beazley in particular for waiting patiently while I wrote this introduction from a hospital room in Las Vegas.

Steve Gerber
Las Vegas, NV

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